

Five dead in Algerian violence; dozens of rebels reported killed

ALGIERS (AP) — Militant attacks and a bomb explosion have left five people dead, while an army offensive has left dozens of militant fighters dead, residents and independent press reported Saturday.

As Algeria prepared for early presidential elections slated for February, both the military and the Islamist militants have stepped up their attacks in recent weeks in this petroleum-rich North African nation.

In the latest violence, an armed group posing as police at a roadblock stopped a truck carrying furniture and slit the throats of

three people inside before setting it on fire, local residents said on condition of anonymity. The incident Thursday took place outside Al Affroun, 30 kms south of Algiers, they said.

In Blida, 50 kms south of the capital, the body of a man whose throat was slit was found Thursday at a taxi stand near a bus station, the newspaper *Liberte* reported. Meanwhile, a bomb exploded while local civil guards were trying to dismantle it in Tafessera, near the western town of Tlemcen on the Moroccan border. The blast killed one of them and injured six others.

A homemade bomb buried in the ground exploded Thursday near the entrance of a technical school in the western city of Arzew, the main port for Algeria's natural gas pipelines. One student was injured, school officials said.

Authorities remained silent about army sweeps in three regions over the past month, though informed sources and independent newspapers reported several dozen militants were killed in the operations. There was no word on army losses.

About a dozen "kafayates," or cells of the Armed Islamic Group were encircled in

the regions of Saïda in the southwest, Babors in the southeast and Bedjaia in north-central Algeria.

The nearly seven-year-old insurgency has left more than 75,000 people dead since the military-backed government cancelled January 1992 elections the Islamic Salvation Front was tipped to win.

President Liamine Zeroual has announced early presidential elections to be held by February and that he was not running. The move was seen as the result of pressure by hardliners on Zeroual, a retired general who had sought talks with militants.



COHEN IN GULF: A soldier from the Bahrain army special units Saturday salutes U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen at Manama airport. Cohen said at the end of his visit to Bahrain that Iraq must fully comply with the resolutions of the U.N. Security Council (AFP photo)

Rebel cease-fire is a farce, Sudan army says

KHARTOUM (AP) — A rebel decision to unilaterally extend a cease-fire by three months is only a pretext to cover troop movements and training, Sudan's army spokesman was quoted as saying Saturday.

"We in the armed forces believe the cease-fire will benefit the rebellion movement," because the rebels will use the time to prepare for future combat, Lt. Gen. Abdul Rahman Sirul-Khatim said in an interview with the daily *Al Rai* Al Akher.

The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army said Thursday that it will extend by another three months the current three-month cease-fire when it ends Wednesday to allow relief food to reach civilians in war provinces like Bahr Al Ghazal in the south.

Khartoum has not officially responded to the announcement, and Sirul-Khatim's comments are the first from a government official on the cease-fire.

Sirul-Khatim, however, indicated that the "government has its position on this [cease-fire]."

Sudan has been embroiled in a civil war for 15 years with Christian and animist rebels fighting for more autonomy from the Muslim, Arab north.

About 1.5 million people have died in the war and related famines caused by food and medical supplies being held up by the fighting.

Iranian group adds over \$300,000 to Rushdie bounty

TEHRAN (AP) — A hard-line Iranian student group has offered 1 billion riyals (\$333,333) to anyone who kills Salman Rushdie, the second bounty on the British author's head.

The move came just weeks after the relatively moderate government of President Mohammad Khatami distanced itself from the death edict and an earlier reward of \$2.5 million.

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi, who made the announcement in New York, and his British counterpart, Robin Cook, had portrayed the move as a way to improve ties that have remained strained over the issue and agreed to exchange ambassadors.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued the fatwa,

or religious edict, on Rushdie in 1989, claiming his book "The Satanic Verses" blasphemed Islam. The semi-official Khomeini Foundation later offered the initial reward to anyone who killed Rushdie.

The Association of Hizbollah University students said despite Kharrazi's pledge, they were still ready to carry out the death sentence against Rushdie and were willing to pay the \$333,333 to any person who killed him, *Kayhan* newspaper reported Saturday.

It did not say where the students would obtain the funds. The students had earlier delivered a letter of protest to the foreign ministry, the paper said.

"Your issuing of a joint

statement with the British foreign minister about Salman Rushdie and the historical edict of Imam Khomeini... caused deep regret and sorrow among Iranians and all over the Muslim World," the paper quoted the letter as saying.

Powerful government hard-liners, dismayed over Khatami's efforts to improve ties with the West since he took office last year, were not happy with the government position on Rushdie.

Last week, more than half the members of Iran's hard-line parliament signed a letter saying the death sentence stands.

Rushdie had spent nearly a decade in hiding since Khomeini issued the edict. He recently voiced relief the ordeal was over.

Former Israeli PM defends U.S. President Clinton

STORM LAKE (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres defended U.S. President Bill Clinton, saying Americans should see whether uninvited influence has infiltrated the government's balance of power.

"I have great respect for President Clinton and I would question whether it was really wise to appoint an independent counsel," the Nobel Peace Prize winner said Friday at Buena Vista University.

"I wouldn't like to make myself a judge," Peres said. "Justice should be done as well as seen, and when it's seen more than it's done, it is a problem." Peres spoke at the school's lecture series on freedom issues.

He met with a group of stu-

dents and faculty Friday afternoon and then lectured in the evening.

"I am a great admirer of the American constitution," Peres said in response to student questions.

"The American constitution is more important than the American continent," he said, adding that the United States needs to take a good look at whether or not uninvited influence has infiltrated the nation's balance of power.

Peres said he thought Clinton is doing an honest job and that a recent poll in Israel showed that 80 per cent of the population there supports Clinton.

He said that since American political parties are not based on religion, religious people have spread them-

selves among the political parties.

"If you had a Catholic party, a Protestant party, a Jewish party, you wouldn't have a United States of America," In Israel, Peres said, "our greatest mistake is that our religions are becoming political parties. The Lord in heaven doesn't stand for reelection and you can't impeach Him." He said there is the competition between religions, and then there is the competition of each religion against a new age.

"Politics is the art of compromise, and religion is the art of not compromising," Peres said. "Where politics begins, religion ends. But the religions have developed a political appetite that can be extreme."

Iranian court upholds German's death sentence — newspaper

TEHRAN (R) — An Iranian newspaper on Saturday reported that a Tehran court had upheld the death sentence against a German businessman for illicit sexual relations with an Iranian woman.

The daily *Iran* newspaper said the court, which reviewed Helmut Hofer's January conviction for having sex with a 27-year-old unmarried Muslim medical student, left

the death order intact. An appeal can still be made to the supreme court.

The sentence has been a major irritant to already strained German-Iranian ties.

Under Iran's Islamic laws, a non-Muslim man can face the death penalty if convicted of having sex outside wedlock with a Muslim woman.

Hofer, who was born in 1941, has said he convert-

ed to Islam years ago when he married a Turkish national. He is now divorced.

"Our relationship was a simple friendship, and I do not accept charges of illicit relations," the daily *Iran* quoted Hofer as telling the court.

Germany has made it clear that relations with Iran could worsen considerably if Tehran executed Hofer.

Ties between the two

countries have improved recently after a row last year sparked by a German court ruling that ordered the 1992 killings of Kurdish dissidents in Berlin. Iran denied the charges.

The woman, sentenced to 99 lashes, was released on bail after serving four months in prison, *Iran* newspaper said. The sentence is still subject to appeal.

Part-time marriage all the rage in Egypt

By Mona Salem
Agence France Presse

CAIRO — Egyptians seeking to tie the knot, but not tie it too tight, are increasingly opting for "passers-by" marriages in which the husband visits his wife occasionally but never stays the night.

"In traditional marriages, the bride leaves home to live with her husband, who must meet all the financial needs of the family. In this union, it is the opposite," said Selim Al Awa, a Cairo attorney who specializes in Islamic law.

"The husband is exempted of any financial obligation and visits his wife periodically," he said.

This unorthodox coupling, which has grown in popularity in recent months and become the

subject of much debate in Egyptian society, appears to get around the age-old problem of eligible women gradually turning into spinsters when no man asks for their hand.

"Tradition calls for unions to be made within the family circle, and this limits a girl's chance to find a husband. As a result, many become old maids," Awa said.

Being married also gives women higher status in an Islamic society. The concierge, the grocer and the neighbours show more respect towards her than when she was single," said Nahid, a 46-year-old interpreter who formed a passers-by marriage with an already married man and became his second wife.

"It suits me fine. I have to travel a lot because of my work, and not having a husband at home means I'm not tied down and can move when the job calls," said Nahid, who sees her husband three or four times a week.

That kind of modern convenience is appealing to more and more Egyptians of both sexes. Newspaper columnist Salah Muntasser said that after she wrote about a woman looking for a passers-by marriage, she was deluged with letters from readers.

"Most of the comments I received were favourable," she said. But while such an arrangement is both handy and legal, it is not sanctioned by the Muslim faith.

"It is a legal form of marriage which is duly registered with the authorities, but it is not proscribed by Islam," said attorney Awa.

Even so, popular preacher Sheikh Yousef Al Qaradawi, whose opinion is widely followed, recently sanctioned the passers-by marriage.

"This marriage is lawful even if it is not accepted by society. I do not encourage it, but I cannot prohibit it," he said.

And, perhaps even more than in traditional unions, passers-by marriages include their fair share of compromise.

"A normal marriage would have been better but sometimes you don't have a choice," said Nahid.

"I worked hard to build a career, and this was my priority. But when you get to a certain age in this society you must make a concession," she said.

"Marriage is a form of protection for women."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

- 15:10 Cartoon — The Pink Panther
- 15:20 Cartoon — The Pumpkin Patch
- 15:30 The Adventures of the Black Stallion
- 16:00 Discover the World of Animals
- 16:30 N.B.A.
- 17:00 Vid Kids
- 18:00 Drama — Bonne Esperance
- 19:00 Le Journal
- 19:15 French Programme — Science Magazine (E=M6)
- 19:30 News Headlines
- 19:35 Life's Most Embarrassing Moments
- 20:00 Today's Environment — Secrets of Science
- 20:30 Drama — Renegade
- 21:05 Farming and Ecology
- 21:30 Behind the Scene
- 22:00 News in English
- 22:30 Mini-series — A Respectable Trade (pt. 1)
- 23:59 End of T. X.

PRAYER TIMES

- 04:15 Fajr
- 05:31 (Sunrise) Duha
- 11:22 Dhuhur
- 14:40 'Asr
- 17:13 Maghreb
- 18:30 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622266

Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811

St. Aftem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751

Amman International Church Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138

Church of Presentation, Sweifeh Tel. 5920146

The United Catholic Church Tel. 4634757

The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679

The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331

The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Moderate to relatively hot weather conditions will prevail with clouds variable to northeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be relatively hot, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 17/29

Amman 24/37

Deserts 14/32

Jordan Valley 24/37

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 30, Aqaba 38 Humidity readings: Amman 21 per cent, Aqaba 20 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun 26

Jerash 32

Um Qays 30

Madaba 30

Petra 30

Dead Sea 36

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Wissam Hazyin 4748563

Dr. Staiwi Abu Zayid 4735011

Dr. Munther Al Qatni 4779959

Dr. Hatim Hammoun 5153776

Firas pharmacy 5661912

Al Asema pharmacy 4637055

Nairoukh pharmacy 4623672

Al Salam pharmacy 4636730

Yaoub pharmacy 4644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660

Najib pharmacy 5347632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh 250080

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Salah Saffarini 987565

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777

Fire Brigade 4617101

Blood Bank 4775121

Highway Police 5343402

Traffic Police 4896390

Public Security Dept 4630321

Police Complaints 5605800

Price Complaints 5661176

Water & Sewage Complaints 4897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111

1

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101

Jordan Television 4773111

Radio Jordan 4774111

Water Authority 5680100

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co. 4636381

RJ Flight Information 44-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 44-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199

The Islamic, Abdali 5666131/7

Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 5856856

Luznith 4630195

Khalidi Maternity 4644281/6

Akileh Maternity 4624412

Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362

Malhas, J. Amman 4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071

Shmeisani Hospital 5669131

University Hospital 5353444

Al-Mushar Hospital 5667277/9

Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3

Al-Bashir 4775111/26

Army, Marka 4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50

Amal Hospital 5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital 17:50

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital

IRBID: (09)990990

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44) 53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone (44) (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

08:30 Jeddah (RJ)

08:45 Lamaca (RJ)

09:00 Bombay (RJ)

09:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)

Prince Faisal celebrates 35th birthday

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein today celebrates his 35th birthday.

Born on Oct. 11, 1963, he received his elementary education at the Islamic College in Amman and later in the United Kingdom.

In 1971, Prince Faisal went to the United States, where he completed his secondary education in the state of Massachusetts and in Washington, D.C.

In 1981, Prince Faisal enrolled at Brown University in the U.S., graduating

in 1985 with a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering.

He simultaneously received training as a pilot and obtained his wings in 1982, later joining the Royal Jordanian Airforce to train in helicopter navigation.

The Prince then returned to the United Kingdom, where he studied at Comwall Academy and was presented with six awards for excellent performance. The Prince this year obtained his masters degree in public administration from a British university.

Prince Faisal, who is a colonel in the Airforce, is commander of the Sixth Royal Squadron and president of several clubs, including the Royal Gliding Club and the Golf Club.

Prince Faisal is involved in several sports and cultural activities and has represented Jordan in numerous international functions.

He is married to Princess Alia, daughter of the late Jordanian businessman Tawfiq Tabbaa. The couple has four children: Princess Aya, Prince Omar, Princess Sara and Princess Ayesh.



Doctor questioned over patient's death

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — A surgeon working for the government is being investigated in connection with the death of a 75-year-old woman who died during an operation at his house in Jabal Nasser.

The doctor was removing a lump from a breast of the woman, identified as Yusra M., but she died during the operation, a medical source said.

The physician then turned himself in to police, the source added.

"Initial investigations indicate that the woman, who had a heart problem, was given a shot of local anaesthesia. Final results

will be available in a few days," pathologist Hani Jahshan told the Jordan Times on Saturday.

He added that a special medical committee comprising forensic pathologists, Awad Tarawneh, Ra'ed Momeni and himself was formed to determine the cause of the woman's death and issue a final report.

The president of the Jordan Medical Association, Bassem Dajani, told the Jordan Times yesterday that "since the doctor is employed by the Health Ministry and is already being interrogated, the union cannot intervene."

"All we can do now is send a representative to

witness the interrogation," Dajani said.

A medical expert, who preferred anonymity, told the Jordan Times that the doctor violated two professional guidelines: the operation was performed at a house rather than a hospital, and it was performed at a place not licensed or equipped for surgery.

Police investigating woman's suicide

Police are investigating the death of a Sri Lankan domestic helper who was found hanged at her employer's house in Marka on Thursday, a source said.

The woman, who was not identified, was discovered

by passers-by hanging from the second floor window of her employer's house, according to the source.

The source said a note was found on the victim stating that she committed suicide "because the money her employer was paying her was not enough."

Police are also investigating the "apparent suicide" of a 19-year-old youth in Jabal Nasser on Thursday, the source told the Jordan Times.

The victim was found hanged with a rope at his family's home, according to the source.

"Initial investigations point to a suicide," the source said.

Government announces plans to replace Ruseifeh garbage dump

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — The government, responding to years of public complaints, Saturday said it will relocate the 800-dunum Ruseifeh garbage dump to a nearby site under a gradual process ending in the year 2000.

The dump, originally designed to receive approximately 3,000 tonnes of garbage per day from Amman, Zarqa and Ruseifeh — areas that are home to nearly half of Jordan's 4.2 million population — is working beyond its capacity, posing real threats to the environment, officials said.

"The Cabinet has decided to move the dump because it cannot take any more garbage and because it has become a health hazard," Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Kreishan told the Jordan Times.

"The transfer will be han-

dled in a manner that takes into consideration the latest techniques and will focus on recycling inorganic waste materials and treating organic waste in order to use them as fertilisers."

He did not say when the decision was taken. But Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh said after visiting the site on Thursday that "the final countdown of the transfer has begun."

Ruseifeh residents have long complained of foul smells from the site and of community diseases that were spreading because of its low hygiene standard.

Kreishan said that a forest would be planted on the site of the former garbage dump and that the new 500-dunum refuse heap would be situated in the Jundi area, 15 kilometres from Ruseifeh.

Several deputies from the Zarqa governorate, in which 40 per cent of Jor-

dan's factories are based, have conditioned their support for the government on a pledge to remove the site.

Deputy Mansour Murad said he gave Tarawneh's cabinet a vote of confidence after the premier promised to look into possibilities of moving the dump's site.

"The government kept its promise and took the decision to set up a new \$25 million dump," Murad told the Jordan Times.

In May, the United Nations Development Programme announced that a \$5.5 million pilot waste management project would be launched in Ruseifeh to help cut pollution, turn the site's solid waste into fertilisers and generate electricity by exploiting methane gas from waste emissions.

The UNDP will provide \$2.5 million of the total cost, while \$1.5 million will come from Denmark and \$1.5 million from Jor-

dan. Murad said the project would be of economic and agricultural significance because farmers might buy treated organic substances for "nominal prices" and use them as fertilisers.

He added that Japan will provide \$16 million to construct a mobile incinerator to help dispose of medical waste.

The country's hospitals have long asked for a general incinerator to eliminate thousands of tonnes of medical waste.

Earlier this year, a specialised committee, set up by former Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to look into solutions to the problem of medical refuse, asked the former government to earmark JD3.5 million from the 1998 budget to help set up a hazardous and medical waste dump at Swaqa, 60 kilometres south of Amman.

Preparations under way to set up epilepsy aid society

By Munther Murjan

AMMAN — Work is under way to set up a national society that will offer assistance to the estimated 65,000 Jordanians suffering from epilepsy, organisers said Saturday.

Businesspersons, physicians and academics involved with the project met Friday and formed a committee to draft the society's internal charter. They will meet in two weeks to review the draft before submitting an official licensing request to the Ministry of Social Development.

A nationwide awareness campaign and contest launched by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) several months ago to help raise public awareness on the plight of Jordan's epileptics — many lone sufferers in a society that occasionally shuns them — has helped highlight their plight.

Several societies, doctors and individuals picked up on the theme and began launching contacts to set up the society, said Yusef Saleh, manager of the contest.

"We decided to embark on the project because of the number of people affected with epilepsy in Jordan," he added.

"We hope the society will be operating by December, when HRH Princess Basma

will present the winners of the contest with their awards," Saleh told the Jordan Times.

An estimated one to two per cent of Jordan's 4.2 million population suffer from epilepsy, according to figures compiled by the QAF.

Revenues of the campaign will come from selling forms for 250 fils that include questionnaires designed to inform as well as test general knowledge on the disorder. The drive will also rely on donations from private and public establishments.

Epilepsy is a recurrent disturbance in the brain's chemical and electrical discharges, a condition that can cause seizures, said Abdul Kareem Qudab, head of the scientific committee supervising the QAF contest.

But the reasons behind such disturbances either remain unknown or are caused by factors such as stress, trauma, low sugar and lack of oxygen to the brain, as well as diseases such as meningitis.

"Epilepsy cannot be predicted, it can happen to either sex at any age, even affecting foetuses," Qudab said. "The seizures... associated with epilepsy can even be felt by a pregnant mother if her baby is affected."

However, one seizure

Regional Catholic church leaders begin meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — The heads of Catholic churches in the Middle East today begin their eighth conference in Fuhels under the chairmanship of Patriarch Michael Sabbah, head of the Roman Catholic Church in Palestine and Jordan.

Discussions during the six-day conference are expected to cover the issue of Jerusalem, relations between Catholic churches and other churches in the region, relations between Muslims and Christians and preparations for a bishops' meeting to be held in Beirut next May on the advent of the third Christian millennium, in addition to other issues of concern to churches in the region.

Taking part in the meeting are patriarchs from Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq as well as the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel.

Press reports Saturday said the church leaders will also be received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Embassy urges nationals to respect law

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Filipino embassy Saturday issued a statement urging its nationals residing in Jordan to abide by the country's labour laws. The one-page statement, which was made available to the Jordan Times, said Jordanian employers must provide Filipino nationals with work and residents permits. "If your Jordanian employers refuse to do so and hold your passports for an unnecessary length of time, please report the matter immediately to the embassy," the statement said. It also urged them not to surrender their passports to Jordanian employers "against their will."

U.S. commerce secretary to visit

AMMAN (Petra) — U.S. Secretary of Commerce William Daley will arrive here on Oct. 17 for a three-day official visit to hold talks with senior officials on means of expanding bilateral economic relations.

Minister meets Egyptian ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Information Minister Nasser Judeh on Saturday received Egyptian Ambassador Hani Riyadh to discuss bilateral cooperation in various fields, particularly in information-related areas.

what's going on

FILM

* "Coup de Foudre" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, on Monday Oct. 12 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

THE PALESTINIAN HERITAGE WEEK

* Seminar entitled "The Islamic Holy Places and the Final Status Negotiations" (in Arabic) with the participation of Dr. Hazem Nusseiba, Dr. Ibrahim Kilani, Dr. Humam Sa'id, Mr. Fayez Jaber, and Sheikh Ahmad Yassin (who will participate by phone) at the Professional Associations Complex (6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.).

LECTURES

* "Horizons of Extrication from the Current Arab Embroglio" (in Arabic) by Khalid Mubiy Al-Din, secretary general of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping in Egypt at Abdul Hammed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman on Monday October 12 at 6:30 p.m.

* "The Jewel in the Crown — The Indian Subcontinent" by Dr. Noha Hobmud and Mrs. Anna Obeidat at the British Council, Jabal Amman on Monday Oct. 12 at 5:00 p.m.

* "The Winter Journey — by Franz Schubert and Wilhelm Muller" by German music expert Helmut Burkart (in cooperation with Goethe-Institut and the German Music Council) at the National Music Conservatory (Tel. 5687620), on Monday Oct. 12 at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Exhibition on "Protection of Archaeological Heritage," a book exhibition, and children's art exhibition at the City Hall, Ras Al 'Ain, until Oct. 14.

* "International Motor Show 99" at the Amman International Motor Show, Airport Road (Tel. 5714211), until Oct. 17.

* "Calligraphy on Crafts" at the Jordan Craft Centre (Al Aydi), Jabal Amman (Tel. 4644555), Oct. 18-31.

* Works by Lania Jamal at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until Oct. 26.

* Art of Arab calligraphy by Nassar Mansour at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts (Tel. 4630128), until Oct. 23.

Iraq sanctions, Israeli closures pressuring economy — Tarawneh

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh on Saturday said Jordan is facing economic pressure due to the continued sanctions on Iraq and Israel's closures of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Addressing a meeting of an executive committee preparing for the Petra International Dialogue, which will be held in the ancient city of Petra next May, Tarawneh added that Jordan is concerned with putting an end to this pressure, which he said was resulting in "very negative" consequences for the country.

The prime minister reviewed the economic restructuring programme being implemented in conjunction with the International Monetary Fund and underlined the need for a national strategy to ensure continued economic progress.

He also said Jordan is seeking to attract investments, promote exports and reach trade agreements with other

countries on an equitable basis.

The delegates scheduled to attend the dialogue, which will be held May 16-19, 1999 under Royal patronage, represent heads of governments in Asia, Africa, Cyprus and Malta.

Referring to the conference, Tarawneh said Jordan hopes that Asian and African countries would open a way for stronger relations among their respective business communities.

Ibrahim Badran, the general coordinator of the conference, told the meeting that the dialogue represents a continuation of a series of meetings held earlier in Malaysia and Africa.

He said Jordan hopes to serve as an important centre for similar Asian and Middle Eastern conferences in the future.

The dialogue will also be attended by a large number of businesspeople from Jordan and Arab and Asian states.



A HELPING HAND: A maintenance worker hands a tool to a co-worker during a street repair operation in Amman (Photo by Yusef 'Allan)

Minister urges more assistance for senior citizens

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Mohammad Kheir Mansur on Saturday urged public and private organisations to help the ministry provide basic services and shelter to the country's senior citizens.

Addressing a one-day seminar organised by the Ministry of Social Development to discuss means of helping the elderly, Mansur said local organisations caring for senior citizens have 450 spaces available but only 150 are occupied.

"The number of elderly citizens is estimated in the tens of thousands, and it is our duty to reach out to them and conduct studies to determine and meet their needs, especially to help them fill their time and keep

them occupied with useful hobbies," said the minister.

He called on the concerned public- and private-sector organisations to expand social and recreational programmes for the elderly, especially in the morning, through cooperation among clubs and voluntary societies.

The Ministry of Social Development plans to begin carrying out such programmes by the end of next year, which has been designated as International Senior Citizens' Year, Mansur said.

Several working papers on means of rehabilitating the elderly through vocational training courses and recreational activities were reviewed by the participants, who represented the public and private sectors and

the Jordan Armed Forces' Royal Medical Services.

A paper presented by Ribhi Qattoun from the General Union of Voluntary Societies called for the amendment of certain provisions of the National Aid Fund to provide for senior citizens not covered by the Social Security Corporation's services.

The Ministry of Social Development provides monthly assistance to persons aged 60 or above who have no other sources of income, while the Health Ministry provides free medical care.

According to a Ministry of Social Development study, there are an estimated 184,320 Jordanian citizens aged 60 or above.

Trade unions ask government to set minimum wage

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Jordan's trade unions on Saturday urged the government to fix a minimum wage for Jordanian workers.

Speaking at a press conference, General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions President Mazin Ma'ayeh did not spell out the level the unions expected as a minimum wage but said that such a matter should be discussed with the government. He added that job opportunities in the country should be made available to domestic labour.

He noted that opportunities in the fields of construction and public service should be given to Jordanians.

Ma'ayeh said the federation has proposed the establishment of a committee to study the labour market's needs in the country and suggest measures to limit foreign workers.

The proposed committee, he said, would include rep-

resentatives from the ministries of interior, labour, planning and administrative development, and the chambers of industry and commerce.

The federation chief's statements followed a recent government crackdown aimed at curbing the number of illegal foreign labourers in the country.

Interior Minister Nayef Qadi last week said foreign workers would be given as much as one month to rectify their status in the country. Those who fail to do so will be deported, he added.

Ma'ayeh put the nation's unemployment rate at between 18 and 20 per cent.

"It is not a fixed figure. It changes every day due to more [university] graduates who join the labour market every now and then," he said.

Ma'ayeh said vocational and university education should be steered according to the needs of the labour market in the country.

U.S. envoy in Kosovo to seek compromise solution to crisis

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — U.S. Balkans envoy Richard Holbrooke was back in the capital of Kosovo Saturday for a packed day of talks aimed at finding a diplomatic solution to the crisis and avoiding NATO air strikes.

Holbrooke was expected to return to Belgrade later Saturday for another meeting with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, whom he met for six hours Friday in talks that he would only describe as "serious."

In Pristina he was due to meet Fehmi Agani, who is leading the ethnic Albanian delegation in negotiations on the Serb-ruled province's future, before talks with Kosovo leader Ibrahim Rugova and with international observers.

Agani has rejected plans by the six-nation Contact Group as "unacceptable" because they left the province within the Yugoslav federation, the daily Blic said Saturday.

He said Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, who make up 90 per cent of the population, "have not renounced independence."

Agani was reacting to plans published in the Albanian-language daily Koha Ditore, which said Kosovo would have its own parliament, government and "president," with local elections under international control and a census of the population.

The text was based on a U.S. plan which the same

newspaper published in September and whose authenticity was later confirmed by U.S. sources.

It did not define the status of Kosovo but said the province would have 20 deputies in the Serbian parliament and 10 in the Yugoslav parliament's chamber of citizens.

In Brussels, NATO sought to give weight to Holbrooke's negotiations by holding a meeting to beat out the final details for military intervention to force Belgrade to comply with a U.N. resolution calling for Serb troop withdrawals from the strife-torn province.

British premier Tony Blair said: "The plans of the NATO countries are very well advanced. We are in a position to take action."

Blair warned that NATO military action was "inevitable" if Milosevic did not comply with United Nations resolutions on the Kosovo crisis.

Brussels diplomats said that once an agreement to act was approved, military strikes could be launched within a few hours.

It will allow NATO to "hold a pistol to the head of Slobodan Milosevic," one diplomat said.

Any decision to strike requires unanimous backing from all NATO's 16 members.

The U.S. has been putting pressure on its NATO partners to agree and in recent days has garnered support from Britain, Spain,

Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Greece and Norway.

German Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schröder also pledged his country's support for military action Friday during talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington.

The resignation of Italy's weakened government Friday is expected to make Italian backing for action simpler to pass through parliament.

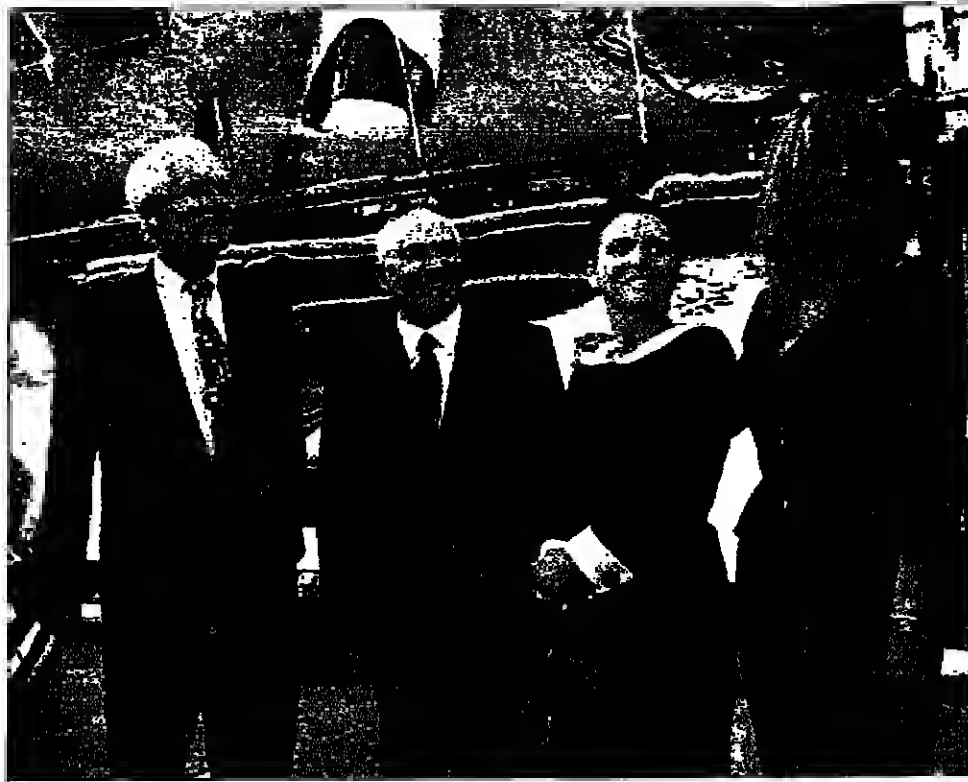
Another diplomat in Brussels put the chances of military action against Serb positions at "one-in-two."

NATO plans envisage limited cruise missile strikes and a graduated air campaign, possible launching the two scenarios in tandem initially. Ethnic Albanian separatists from the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), who have been fighting Serb forces since Belgrade's crackdown began in February, confirmed Saturday they would stick to their unilateral ceasefire agreement.

The guerrilla movement said its truce, announced Thursday, was designed to help the enforcement of the U.N. Security Council which also demanded a cease-fire in the province.

The rebels added that "the moment the enemy (Serb) forces heard of the decision, they started bombarding villages in the Klinia, Drenice and Malisevo regions."

It said it had therefore redeployed troops in the central areas where they are under attack.



GREEN CELEBRITIES — media mogul Ted Turner, former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, actress Julia Louis-Dreyfus and actress/activist Jane Fonda pose outside the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, California, next to an electrically-powered automobile and a mirrored thermal heating unit. Turner, Louis-Dreyfus and Fonda were recipients of the Global Green's Millennium Awards for Environmental Activism presented by Gorbachev. The automobile and the heating unit are alternative means of energy usage and production in the state of California (Reuters photo)

Afghan Taleban locked in heavy fighting with foes

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghan opposition forces said Saturday they captured territory in northern Afghanistan in overnight fighting with the Taleban Islamic militia and repulsed two other Taleban offensives elsewhere.

Opposition sources said forces loyal to Ahmed Shah Masood, military chief of the ousted Afghan government, were fighting with the Taleban after capturing an airport and adjoining villages in Takhar province bordering Tajikistan Friday.

The Taleban movement rejected the opposition claim and said it had not lost any territory in the northeast.

Other Afghan sources in Peshawar, capital of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, said the militia had launched an offensive against Masood's forces on front lines in Parwan and Baghlan provinces and made slight advances.

But a senior opposition commander said two Taleban attacks had been repulsed and the militia suffered serious casualties.

"They (Taleban) have suffered serious casualties in the attack, for which they have been making preparations for weeks," the opposition commander said, wishing not to be identified.

There was no independent confirmation of either report. "In our operation that started yesterday, we have had

some gains... we have taken Khoja Ghar airport and its township along with some other villages and heights overlooking Talooqan (provincial capital of Takhar)," the opposition source said.

"We have taken over 200 Taleban fighters as prisoners and killed some 40 of them in the battle," he said.

But Afghan sources in Peshawar said about 1,200 Taleban attacked Masood's forces in Ghorband in Parwan province using heavy weapons and artillery and made some advances. The militia also advanced in Andarab in Baghlan province.

The opposition commander said the Taleban's other attack was concentrated north of the Salang tunnel, which links Kabul with Jalal-ud-Din, 77 km north of the capital.

Masood, who controls Badakhshan, part of Takhar and north of Kabul, remains the last obstacle to the Taleban's gaining complete control of Afghanistan, 95 per cent of which they have captured since stunning victories last month and in August.

The reports of fighting come amid tension between the Taleban and Iran, which has deployed a huge army on its Afghan border, demanding the Taleban hand over renegade fighters responsible for killing its diplomats in Mazar-i-Sharif in August.

The Taleban said the border

was calm Friday, although a clash with Iran Thursday heightened the risk of war.

The U.N. secretary-general's special envoy for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, met Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz in Islamabad as part of the second stage of a mission to ease tension between Iran and the Taleban.

The details of the meeting were not immediately available but Brahimi held talks with other Pakistani officials Friday in which he said his immediate concern was to reduce tension between Tehran and the militia.

He had earlier visited Tehran for four days and held detailed discussions with Iranian leaders.

Predominantly Shiite Muslim Iran has been at loggerheads with the Sunni Taleban since the militia swept into Kabul two years ago and ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Tensions mounted in August after 10 Iranian diplomats and a journalist disappeared from Iran's consulate-general in Mazar-i-Sharif when Taleban fighters captured the opposition northern alliance stronghold.

Iran has massed thousands of troops in its two eastern provinces bordering Afghanistan for war games and kept them close to the tense frontier.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Indonesian army denies link to grisly murders

BANYUWANGI, Indonesia (R) — Indonesia's military denied Saturday it had anything to do with a series of grisly murders of Muslim clerics and practitioners of black magic in East Java. "According to preliminary investigations, no member of ABRI (the armed forces) was involved," Major General Djoko Subroto, military head of East Java, told reporters. "There is a child of an ABRI member currently under investigation. But that does not mean that there is an ABRI member involved." There has been growing speculation that soldiers were behind the killings which have been going on for several months around the port town of Banyuwangi in the east of Indonesia's main island. Many of the victims — Muslim clerics and practitioners of black magic — were chopped into pieces and parts of their bodies hung from trees. Local Muslim groups have put the death toll at 164 but no one has come up with a clear motive. Police said earlier that four members of the military were being questioned over the killings. The military in turn has accused members of the banned Communist Party of being involved, although that has been largely ridiculed in the local press. One military source speculated the butchery was an attempt to create tension between Muslims and members of a leading opposition party which is holding its congress on the resort island of Bali, a short ferry ride from Banyuwangi.

U.S. reverses deportation of escaped IRA prisoners

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A federal appeals court in California has reversed extradition orders for three escaped IRA prisoners, the office of the Sinn Féin here reported. The U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco Friday reversed deportation orders against Pol Brennan, Terry Kirby and Devin Barry Anu, a statement from the Capitol Hill office of Sinn Féin reported. The decision "is a long awaited and welcome action," said U.S. Sinn Féin representative Rita O'Hare. "These three men should never have been arrested and we look forward to their imminent return to their families." The men — also known as the H-Block Three — escaped in 1983 from a maximum security prison outside Belfast and fled to the United States. The men are currently being held in a California prison awaiting bail. The British government, which has pursued their extradition throughout peace talks with the Irish Republican Army over the fate of Northern Ireland, "should withdraw the extradition warrants," O'Hare said.

Amnesty wants Pinochet arrested while in London

LONDON (AFP) — Human rights group Amnesty International Saturday urged British police to arrest the Chilean former dictator Augusto Pinochet who is in London convalescing from back surgery. "There is a case for him to stand trial," Amnesty spokesman Richard Bunting argued, referring to "very serious crimes" for which Pinochet "has enjoyed a great degree of impunity over recent years. It would be important to send a signal to the world's torturers that there can be no impunity for those sort of crimes," said Bunting. The 82-year-old former general is implicated in the execution, assassination and disappearance of 1,198 opponents to his military regime which he led with an iron fist from 1973 to 1990 after a bloody coup against then President Salvador Allende. But the British government rejected Amnesty's call, saying "we have no visa regime with Chile so there is nothing to prevent General Pinochet like any Chilean citizen from making a private visit to the U.K." Pinochet is convalescing from an operation on his lower back before returning to Chile in around 10 days. Amnesty claims that the former dictator has made several private visits to Britain. A foreign office spokesman noted that the British government "had no involvement in the visit and no British minister or official has met General Pinochet."

Pakistan apologises for killing Indian trooper

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Pakistan has apologised for the death of an Indian trooper after its border guards shot at a patrol, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Saturday. A written apology has been given to India's paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) by a commanding officer of the Pakistan Rangers, the news agency said. An Indian trooper was killed when the Rangers opened fire on a BSF patrol on the international border in the northern Indian desert state of Rajasthan Thursday, PTI said. The BSF, which guards India's land frontier with Pakistan, immediately went on alert all along the winding border. Indian and Pakistani troops regularly clash with each other in the disputed Himalayan state of Kashmir but rarely fight elsewhere along the border. The two countries have waged three wars in the past 50 years. Bilateral talks are scheduled to resume on Oct. 15 in Islamabad.

China chef offers 'Clinton-Lewinsky' chicken stew

BEIJING (R) — A culinary punster in a Chinese provincial capital is boasting a world premiere dish: Clinton-Lewinsky chicken stew, a Beijing newspaper reported Saturday. Menus in the restaurant in Nanjing, capital of the southern region of Guangxi, offer "Kelindun Lawinsiji", a stew of black dates and strips of chicken, the Beijing Evening News said. The name of the entrée is a pun on the Chinese name for U.S. President Bill Clinton and White House intern Monica Lewinsky which uses the characters for "dates," "stew" and "chicken." "The chef acknowledged, however, that the new dish was getting a lot of inquiries but very few orders," the paper said. China's anti-pornography authorities this week seized a Chinese version of the Starr report, branding it an "illicit publication" for its graphic descriptions of sex in the White House. The report was an underground best-seller in China.

Indonesian dragons arrive in Lisbon

LISBON (AFP) — Two Komodo dragons, a present from the Indonesian government, arrived in Lisbon zoo this week, a sign of a thaw in relations between Jakarta and Lisbon which broke off diplomatic ties over Indonesia's invasion of the former Portuguese colony of East Timor in 1975. Rinca, the male, two metres long and weighing in at 16 kilos and his female companion Bino, 1.8 metres long and 13 kilos, will be on display to visitors in a special area 250 square metres in size, with 80 square metres under cover to maintain the ideal temperature and humidity for their well-being. The pair of "varanus komodoensis," named after the island of Komodo, were born in captivity in Yogyakarta zoo. The original gift was announced last August by the Indonesian minister for youth, Agung Laksono, in thanks for the welcome given the Indonesian delegation which attended the first world conference of youth ministers staged in the Portuguese capital. The visit, the first to Lisbon by an Indonesian minister, turned into a "charm offensive" in the wake of the fall of President Suharto and a marked improvement in the atmosphere of negotiations over East Timor between the two countries at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Al chief blasts U.S. hypocrisy on rights

MEXICO CITY (R) — The head of Amnesty International criticised the United States Friday for its "hypocrisy" over its "bad and ... deteriorating" human rights situation.

Echoing a damning report published earlier this month by the global human rights watchdog, Secretary-General Pierre Sane said police brutality is widespread, prisoners suffered inhuman treatment, the use of the death penalty infringed various international laws, asylum seekers were abused and minorities were targeted in the United States.

"The human rights situation in the United States is bad, and it is deteriorating," Sane said on a visit to Mexico, where he was seeking Mexican support for a campaign to improve respect for rights in the world's only remaining superpower.

"We want to bring to light the hypocrisy of the U.S. government. The U.S. government uses international law and international justice when it suits it and disregards the very same international laws and international justice when

it doesn't suit it," he said.

Amnesty's appeal for backing from Mexico met with a cold shoulder. Sane told Reuters a meeting with Foreign Minister Rosario Green was "disappointing."

"Her concern is that raising the human rights issue with the American government ... is an intervention in the domestic affairs of the United States," Sane said in an interview.

"That is not, in my view, motivated so much by concern with the sovereignty of the United States but rather by concern with the sovereignty of Mexico. If Mexico can do it, then others can do it to Mexico. But that is precisely the whole logic of having an international system of human rights protection."

The Mexican foreign ministry issued a statement saying Green informed the Amnesty chief of Mexico's progress on human rights but made no mention of Amnesty's request for Mexico to pressure the United States.

The two also traded views over the rights of millions of Mexican immigrants living in

the United States. Green stressed that protecting its nationals was the work of 42 Mexican consulates in the United States, the ministry said.

Amnesty, perhaps better known for condemning abuses by dictators in the Third World than turning the spotlight on developed democracies, launched a one-year campaign for U.S. penal reform Tuesday.

Amnesty says U.S. prisoners suffer sexual abuse and are often restrained in a life-threatening way by stun guns, leg irons, pepper spray and restraint chairs.

Sane said he had met a woman who was shackled to a delivery chair in a hospital for 7-1/2 hours while she gave birth.

U.S. officials have said they welcome scrutiny but believe the U.S. justice system to be the envy of many nations.

Amnesty also condemned the use of the death penalty in several U.S. states, saying child offenders were often executed, as were foreigners who did not receive proper consular assistance.

United Kingdom considering moratorium on genetic crops

LONDON (R) — Britain said Saturday it was considering a three-year moratorium on the commercial planting of genetically-modified (GM) crops, which environmentalists say could damage human health, plants and wildlife.

English Nature, the government's chief environmental advisers, have recommended the three-year pause to allow further research into the possible harmful side-effects of GM crops, Environment Minister Michael Meacher told BBC radio.

"I do think English Nature's case does deserve very close scrutiny. We'll take a decision as soon as we reasonably and properly can, but this is a strategic decision of very great importance," Meacher said.

Government officials held talks earlier in the week with biotechnology companies, environmentalists and other groups with an interest in GM crops.

"(The officials) will be reporting to me shortly on the

outcome of their discussions and I and my fellow ministers... will then reach a decision as to whether or not there is a case for a moratorium," Meacher said in the radio interview.

He said the government wanted to see the results of research projects on the environmental impact of insect resistance, disease resistance and herbicide tolerance in GM plants.

"All of those will be completed in 1999 and 2000 and I do think it is extremely important that the indirect and cumulative effects which up to now have not received the full attention they might, (are) now centre stage," he said.

Meacher also hinted that there would be tighter regulation if the commercial planting of GM crops was allowed.

"The question of the moratorium is not the only issue. We are looking extremely closely at the regulatory system. We do realise there is unquestionably very considerable public disquiet on this issue," he

said. Environmental campaigners say GM crops — engineered to resist pests or tolerate extra herbicide — could kill off the plants which act as food for birds, insects and animals.

They also say more research is needed into the possible side-effects on human health of eating GM food.

Newspapers said the government had Friday summoned the heads of biotechnology companies based in Britain, including the U.S. giant Monsanto, for talks about a voluntary code which would delay wide-scale planting of the crops till 2002.

"Some groups have said they want to move to a moratorium. The purpose of this meeting is to let both sides voice their opinions," the Independent quoted a Monsanto spokesman as saying.

"Once these have been gathered, it is up to Mr. Meacher to take a view. We had not planned commercial planting of crops till 2000," he said.

German SPD facing major split over key position

BONN (R) — Germany's Social Democrats, returned to power after 16 years in opposition, are facing a major battle over who will lead the centre-left party in parliament. SPD officials said Saturday.

The row between chairman Oskar Lafontaine and parliamentary leader Rudolf Scharping dominated newspaper headlines Saturday and threatened to cast a shadow over Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schröder's inauguration later this month.

"Power struggle in the SPD," wrote Bild, the nation's largest daily. "Oskar grabs his club. Lafontaine wants to boot Scharping out of the parliamentary leadership," Lafontaine, who made Schröder's win possible by taming the SPD's powerful left wing, wants Scharping to move to the defence ministry and to install in his place as parliamentary leader Franz Muenzinger, party manager and a loyal Lafontaine supporter.

Lafontaine, tapped to be finance minister in Schröder's cabinet, has threatened Scharping that he will abandon those plans and take over the SPD leadership in parliament if Scharping refuses to move.

But Scharping, SPD chairman until defeated by

Lafontaine in 1995, has reportedly said he is ready for Lafontaine's challenge. He has also been soliciting SPD members of parliament for their support in the event that there is a contested vote.

"Scharping intends to run for reelection as parliamentary leader, he doesn't want to become defence minister," an SPD official said. He added Scharping had made it clear he will not change his mind.

"If Lafontaine wants to challenge me then he is welcome to try," Scharping was quoted in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) as saying. "Then we'll let the parliamentary group decide."

Schröder, who defeated Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats on Sept. 27, is expected to be formally voted in as chancellor by parliament on Oct. 27. Kohl's government is serving in a caretaker role until that point.

Schröder has appealed to Scharping to accept the post as defence minister and said he wants both Scharping and Lafontaine in his cabinet.

But Schröder refrained from stating his preference for the parliamentary group leadership position, the FAZ said.

SPD officials have said a decision is expected within the next few days. Schröder,

Lafontaine and Scharping are expected to meet over the weekend to try to resolve the row.

A final decision is expected by Tuesday, when the executive board of the SPD parliamentary group meets.

Schröder's SPD and the ecologist Greens won a 21-seat majority at a general election last month and want to finalise a coalition pact by the end of next week.

They resume coalition negotiations Sunday in Bonn and are trying to iron out differences over tax policy, one of the toughest issues facing the new government.

The parties failed at the last meeting Thursday to hammer out details of an "ecological tax reform" which would raise energy levies to fund cuts in Germany's high social security charges — seen by both parties as a tax on jobs.

Although the two agreed to hike petrol tax by 6 pfennigs (4 cents) a litre next year, more work needs to be done to agree further energy tax increases in time for further coalition talks Sunday, party officials said.

Sunday's talks will also look at phasing out nuclear power — an existential goal for the Greens but an issue where the SPD, worried about job losses, is in less of a hurry.

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Editorial and Advertising offices
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman

Telephones: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585

Facsimile: Editorial: 5696183, Advertising: 5693337

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Web Site: <http://www.access2arabia.com/jordantimes/>

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Extremists come and go

IN WAR and in peace the Arabs, but especially the Palestinians, have had to deal with a variety of extremists. Ariel Sharon, who was appointed foreign minister in Benjamin Netanyahu's government on Friday, is only one in a choir of Jewish extremists that includes in its ranks Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir to name only two. But even hard-liners like Begin had to come to terms with reality and relinquish land as he did in Sinai.

Many Arabs of course are dismayed at Sharon's appointment to the sensitive post and his naming as the interlocutor of the Palestinians during final status talks. Many still remember him for the invasion he led on Lebanon, his siege of Beirut and his role in the Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982. But Sharon is now the most powerful partner in the government of Netanyahu that leads Israel in its negotiations with the Arabs. And by no means is he the most extreme.

What makes his appointment grave are his repeated pronouncements that Israel should keep most of the West Bank and deny the Palestinians their right to self-determination. But more than that is the fact that the Arabs are as disunited today as they were in 1982, when Sharon was able to bulldoze Beirut without one Arab raising even a finger in his face. Sixteen years later the so-called Arab Nation has been further weakened and dragged into several conflicts that seem to have no end. What remains is a determined Palestinian people who recognise that they have no path towards peace except negotiations, no matter who is in power in Israel. The two other Arab partners, Jordan and Egypt, will continue, each in its own way and by its own means, to lend support to the Palestinians and push the Israelis towards the only viable compromise, land for peace.

And this is what it is all about. No matter how extremist Sharon is, he will have to face reality on Oct. 15 in Washington when the deal for the second redeployment will be worked out. Whether its one per cent, as Netanyahu interprets U.S. assurances, or 13 per cent as the U.S. insists, Sharon will be put to his first test.

Until then we'll wait and see.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek said some people work hard to identify problems that could face Jordan, and if they don't succeed, they will keep searching for more in order to spread fear, negativity and despair. He said that recently, such people are those saying that external debt instalments will shoot up in a way that will force the Central Bank to use all its reserves and lead the country to bankruptcy. This notion does not bear close inspection to the figures, he claimed, which say that in 1998 interest on debts was \$410.7 million; by the year 2000 it will be \$436.8 million, and it will drop to \$431.4 million in 2001. Thus interest payments will be almost stable for the next four years, said Fanek. At the same time, instalments, by the end of 1998, will be \$408.9 million, dropping to \$386 million in 1999 and increasing to \$403.9 by 2000. According to Fanek, total interest and instalments from 1998 to 2000 will be \$819.6 million, \$810.5 million and \$840.7 million respectively. The Central Bank will pay these amounts from exports and aid, Fanek said adding that there is nothing new about debts in Jordan.

Al Dustour's Jihad Momani complained that it is strange how Jordan is watching Palestinian-Israeli negotiations while doing nothing. He said that the results of the negotiations will affect the Kingdom one way or another, and it is disagreeable to watch the Palestinian Authority negotiating alone at a time when there is around one million refugees living in the country. Jordan has to be the most concerned party in the "refugee case" whose fate should be the starting point of any negotiations. The Palestinian Authority and Israel have reached "dangerous" results which could threaten Palestinians living all around the world, he claimed. The Authority accepts Israeli demands and not Palestinian needs, while Jordan is outside the "game" watching the most dangerous conspiracy against the Kingdom and Palestine, concluded the writer.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Dr. Fahed Fanek

The cost and benefit of a strong dinar

TO PEG a certain currency to the U.S. dollar is a guaranteed prescription for creating confidence in that currency, bringing inflation in the country concerned under control, achieving economic stability, dismissing negative rumours and ruling out doubts about possible devaluations and speculation against that currency with the capital flight that goes with it.

However, not every country can peg its ailing currency to the dollar. In order for such a connection to be possible and feasible, the currency board, or the monetary authority such as the central bank should be able to convert that currency into dollars on demand, at a fixed price, without hesitation or questions asked.

That is how the JD was divorced from the vague basket of currencies and pegged to the dollar in October 1995. For three years since then, the JD was fixed at \$1.41 per JD, and the Central Bank of Jordan stood ready to convert any amount of JDs into dollars immediately at the pre-determined price.

Such a policy did not result in a meltdown of the Central Bank's reserves of foreign exchange. On the contrary, the confidence spurred by this practice, coupled with a high interest rate, caused an increase in the

demand on the JD, and a rise in the reserves of the Central Bank in foreign exchange which tripled during the past three years.

Of course there are winners and losers for any economic policy. The strong JD benefitted savers, lenders, salaried people and investors. The same policy hurt borrowers, exporters and those taking up long-term positions in foreign exchange waiting for the JD to weaken.

No wonder that some commentators are now doubting this policy. They ask if the Jordanian economy is able to maintain a strong JD for long.

The answer to this legitimate question is yes. The Jordanian economy was able to maintain the exchange rate of the JD vis-a-vis the dollar even when its growth rate was at a historical low of less than one per cent. The bulk of the Jordanian international transactions are in dollars. Jordanian exports and imports are priced and paid for in dollars not JDs. Consequently the export sector has no reason to complain or ask for a change in the current stability of the JD.

The fact that the current account of the balance of payments posted a surplus in 1997 for the first time, is another indication that the strong JD was effectively an

asset and not a liability to the balance of payments, and that the current exchange rate is realistic and appropriate, and should be maintained.

The indexes of volume and prices of both imports and exports during 1997 show that the cost of imports calculated in JDs was on average 2.2 per cent below the previous year. Likewise the average price index of exports calculated in JDs was 2.9 per cent lower than the previous year. Both are small percentages which did not lead to suppressing exports. If anything, exports rose by 6.8 per cent in volume. Nor did these percentages cause an inflated import bill, as imports in fact declined in volume by 2.3 per cent. In general, the deficit in the balance of trade was narrowed substantially during the year.

Yes, a strong JD has an economic price that must be paid, but monetary stability, general confidence, controlling inflation, encouraging investments, enhancing the inflow of capital, and preventing capital flight are all real advantages worth paying a price, which is understood by the new government of Dr. Fayez Tarawneh, who has undertaken to preserve the gains produced by the current prudent monetary policy.

Too many legends, too many winds

By Gwynne Dyer

I MANAGED not to write about Princess Diana on the first anniversary of her death a month ago — after all, she hasn't done much that's newsworthy in the past year — but you just can't get away from the topic of fame. Which, of course, inevitably leads the conversation straight back to you-know-who.

It started at dinner, with Kate, my 6-year-old, asking what we meant by saying that someone was a 'legend'. I said that it was a famous person who stayed famous after they died — which started an argument about whether there could really be a 'living legend'.

Sure, said her mother, there are lots of them. Bob Dylan, for example — whereupon the 15-year-old asked who Bob Dylan was.

He wrote lots of songs that you've heard, Tina said. 'Blowing in the Wind', for example.

'Gone with the Wind'? Melissa replied. No, that's a book and a film, not a song, I said.

Well, is it that song about Princess Diana? Melissa asked. No, that's 'Candle in the Wind'. I said — and added: The song was originally about Marilyn Monroe. She's a legend, too.

The point being that we are overrun with legends. The average person now recognises the names and faces of many more 'famous' people whom they have never met than real people whom they actually know. And this is surely an historical first.

If you doubt me, try this experiment. Just keep track of how many people die in the next week or two that you have heard of. Not just mega-stars like Frank Sinatra, but anyone whose face and name you recognise. You'll find that there are at least a couple a week.

Two people per week is a hundred a year. At least one hundred people you have never met but nevertheless know something about — actors and actresses, sports stars, politicians, business people, musicians and singers — are dying each year. You see it on the television or read it in the paper, and generally pass on dry-eyed.

In the very same month that Diana died, Mother Theresa passed away in Calcutta. General Mohutu, ex-dictator of Zaire, died, as did American pop artist Roy Lichtenstein, and Professor Hans Eysenck, whose views on race and intelligence were widely condemned as racist. That's an average of more than one person dying per week whose fame is international. Add in the deaths of all those who are only famous

in the country or city where you live, and the number climbs very steeply indeed — to at least a dozen a month.

Even counting people whom you met once and barely remember, nothing like one hundred people whom you actually know die each year. You 'know' at least ten times as many people by their fame as you know in your real life.

The number of people you know well enough to have a brief conversation when you meet is a remarkably stable figure: between 140 and 200 people.

'Mass media are the reasons democracy started, but it turns out that the mass media also have another function: to fill our minds with a large phantom population of 'famous' people'

Hermits know fewer people, insurance salesmen and politicians know more, but unless some professional deformation skews the total, the number of names in your address book will stay about the same as the maximum size of a hunting-and-gathering band.

Well, obviously, human beings evolved in hunting-and-gathering bands, and spent 99 per cent of our history living in groups of that size. We are programmed to deal with around 140-200 relationships — some close, many more casual — because what held those groups together was a dense network of social ties.

These are very large numbers for our sort of primates, by the way. Chimpanzees, our nearest relatives, cannot handle more than about seventy relationships, and their bands split in two if they grow beyond that number.

Our secret weapon was speech, which gave us a low-cost way to maintain a large number of social ties while getting on with our lives. (You can't do

anything else while you're servicing a relationship by picking nits out of your neighbour's fur). There are even those who argue that the very large size of human bands was a key factor in starting us down the road to global domination.

But now we have grown to average 'band sizes' in the millions. There is no way to know so many people; personal ties cannot hold the group together. For the first five thousand years of civilisation we solved the problems of cohesion and cooperation with force; all early mass societies were tyrannies that you could not leave. But now most of us live in democracies.

Mass media, starting with books and newspapers and ending with television and the Internet, are the reasons democracy became possible. They gave people a way of following the argument about who we are and where we are going as a society, and even taking part in it from time to time (mainly by voting). But it turns out that the mass media also have another function: to fill our minds with a large phantom population of 'famous' people who stand in for the millions of fellow-citizens we cannot really know.

Andy Warhol talked about a future where everybody would be famous for fifteen minutes, and there are now down-market television freak-shows that prove he was at least partly right. But the willing victims who are briefly exposed and humiliated on vehicles like the Jerry Springer Show aren't really famous. You will never read their obituaries in the paper.

Some famous people are known for what they actually did in the world: Mohutu and Mother Theresa, for example. Others, like Princess Diana or Frank Sinatra, were famous more for being who they were — for the kind of personality that their simplified public image embodied. And that, I suspect, is the point.

In the hugely complex societies we live in now, we cannot even begin to understand the variety of human experience and personality through our own narrow circle of acquaintance. The famous people whom we vicariously 'know' help to fill that gap, and since these are zero-maintenance relationships, we can have as many as we need.

So if you obsessed about Diana, don't worry. (Maybe that's what Bill Clinton is there for, too.)

The writer is a London-based journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries.

Transparency is a prerequisite for democracy

By Mohammad Asfour

ONE OF the main issues that the new Cabinet has focused upon is its willingness to maintain a reasonable level of transparency. This would enable the public to enjoy a thorough, comprehensive and deep understanding of issues and therefore reinforce its ability to follow up, assess and evaluate government procedures and trends.

Transparency in the sense of being more evident and clear, to be evaluated and followed up, is an essential component for improving the investment climate and the general awareness of what has been adopted and for what purposes. Along with this concept, one could argue that the more transparency society enjoys, the greater the ability of this society to take further steps towards advancing democracy and of the opposition parties to be a part of the political process.

Moreover, it is argued that transparency is an introduction to democracy and a prerequisite for any democratic practices. However, although liberty and transparency are two faces of the same coin, being in a transparent climate does not and should not mean that you are enjoying absolute transparency; that is to say, transparency itself has its own ceiling and parries which cannot be crossed. Transparency within this

context is not allowed to breach privacy or reveal secrets, and should be stopped as soon as it starts to penetrate into these matters. This formula should be dealt with very clearly, as it reflects the consistency necessary in dealing with democracy and personal liberty.

Even though transparency is a vital principle for advancing and enhancing democracy, no one should imagine that democracy without transparency was intended as a tool to penetrate secrecy. As the current government is stressing upon transparency, one should be able to maximise this

'Although liberty and transparency are two faces of the same coin... transparency is not allowed to breach privacy or reveal secrets'

benefit and use this privilege and reinforce one's right in practising democracy, taking into consideration the limitation of this process. Transparency has to be restricted to public issues and public interests and has to serve raising public awareness, whereby it can help in making people support decisions and positively respond to government actions and procedures. Transparency is a major step towards building confidence, it is considered a means towards an open democracy and is a tool for laying the roots for public awareness and proper public behaviour in a democratic nation.

The writer is a local businessman and former President of the Chamber of Commerce.

LETTERS

One-eyed justice

To the editor:

WE ENTERED Jordan legally, we came here to work and earn a living. We have been law-abiding citizens from the day we set foot in this country. Then comes an order "to crack down on illegal workers in an effort to fight unemployment."

Let me reiterate, we can't enter Jordan if our papers are illegal. We came here with all the proper documents reviewed, checked and approved from the airport. So, why are there numerous Filipino workers who became illegal? A very simple logic: their lives were made miserable by their employers!

It is claimed that there are 300,000 foreign workers who have no valid permits. There are only 3,000 Filipinos and yet we are the target of this campaign. We are not the answer to

Jordan's unemployment problem. Do you think Jordanians will hire fellow Jordanians to work as domestic helpers? What are the reasons factories and offices prefer Filipinos, even though they know they will pay more to hire one with work permits and everything. Let's face it, you need first-class service! You knocked in the middle of the night and jailed us although we have all the necessary papers. Where's justice? Is it blind on one eye? Tell me now, who should be handcuffed you or me?

Belle De Jesus,
Amman.

Worth remembering

To the editor:

REGARDING THE editorial in your highly esteemed daily on October 6, 1998 (Inaction also

breeds reaction), we have to admit that we did not understand quite clearly your point. It is hard to believe that anyone could advocate military actions and bombardments. It is very clear that nobody in the world is more concerned about the events in southern part of Yugoslavia than Yugoslavs, since, we are dying and suffering, not others.

In that context, we are convinced that there are some misunderstandings, and we suggest people read the full text of Resolution 1199 of the U.N. Security Council, as well as the Statement by the U.N. Security Council, in order to judge if there is any legal basis for the military threats and pressures on Yugoslavia.

Nevertheless, few details should be mentioned. First, the U.N. Security Council confirmed and supported the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic

of Yugoslavia. Second, the U.N. Security Council condemned terrorist activities by Albanian separatist in the Serbian provinces, Kosovo and Metohija.

Third, political parties of Albanian minorities in Kosovo and Metohija are requested by U.N. Security Council to accept negotiations without preconditions and to condemn terrorism. (So far, they are failing to fulfil these requests. Why? Because they are waiting, promised attacks on Yugoslavia).

These are a few elements that lead to a better understanding of the situation related to Kosovo and Metohija. Additionally, Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija province are not all Muslims. Only half of them are Muslims, the rest are Christians (Orthodox and Catholics).

All observers agree that religious factors play no role in the conflicts in the southern province of

Serbia. Also, nobody in international community is speaking of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and Metohija.

Yugoslavia is a small country and Yugoslavia, definitely, is not provoking, threatening or attacking anybody. Therefore, the aim of the threats and pressure is very clear — to cut off a piece of Yugoslavia's and Serbia's territory contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and regulations of international law.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is convinced that there is no alternative but to negotiate; that there is no alternative to a political solution. Finally, it is better to have ten years of negotiations than one day of war. And negotiations cannot be labelled 'inaction'.

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Amman.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Non-Jordanian investments at the Amman Financial Market amount to JD46m in nine months

THE NET investments by non-Jordanians at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) amounted to JD46 million during the first nine months of this year, Jordan Securities Commission (JSC) chairman Bassam Saket has said. The amount compares with JD54 million during the same period of 1997. He explained that non-Jordanians bought shares and stocks for about JD97 million during the January-September period of this year and sold around JD51 million of such investments during the same period.

Saket detailed the trading activities by pointing out that foreign purchases totalled approximately JD60 million, an amount that represented 61 per cent of the total purchases by non-Jordanians. Purchases by Arab investors amounted

to JD37 million for the remaining 39 per cent of the overall purchases of non-Jordanians. As to sales, Arab investors sold shares and stocks for a total of JD24 million representing 47 per cent of sales by non-Jordanians. The remaining 53 per cent which represented JD27 million were sales by foreign investors.

Saket also gave statistics for the month of September 1998 which recorded purchases of shares and stocks for a total of around JD5.2 million compared to JD17.5 million during September 1997. Sales amounted to JD5.7 million compared to JD6 million during September of last year. Al Aswaaq + Al Ra'i + Al Arab Al Yawm.

National water company likely to become a reality during special conference next week

IT IS expected that the project of drawing water from the Disi basin will enter the implementation stage when a special conference is held next week with the participation of the Jordanian sector and the foreign companies interested in the scheme which costs more than \$500 million. Water and Irrigation Minister Hani Mulki said a national water company, which HRH Crown Prince Hassan has recently called for its establishment, will be created during the conference.

The minister indicated that the foreign firm which will implement the project has to work with the national water company as a strategic partner. "The opportunity will be open for the Jordanian private sector to buy shares in the company," Mulki said adding that the opportunity will also be open for the Social Security Corporation and the Jordan Investment Corporation to cover the remaining shares.

"The project should bring an economic recovery in Jordan due to its major impact whether in employing Jordanian labour or in indirect benefits on the economy, especially the construction sector," the minister pointed out. According to Mulki, drawing the water from the Disi basin will provide between 110 and 120 cubic metres of drinkable water by the beginning of 2004.

Mulki said the high cost of the project necessitates that the government start conducting studies immediately to show the cost of water when it reaches the public in order to take into consideration the effect of higher water costs on limited income groups.

The minister denied that there is any Israeli participation in drawing the water from the Disi basin. He stressed that the project will pass through the Jordanian territory from Ras Al Naqab in Maan to Amman (Al Arab Al Yawm).

Lebanon plans paperless trading

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon is preparing laws to promote the use of credit cards, allow paperless trading in securities and permit securitisation of assets, the first vice governor of the Bank of Lebanon has said.

"Our objective is to give a strong impetus to the development of the payment system in Lebanon," Nasser Saidi said in an interview with Reuters.

"During the rest of 1998 and 1999 the main focus of our effort will be on credit and debit cards and integrating those into our payment system," he said.

The cost of the project, financed by the central bank and Lebanon's commercial banks, will be between \$25 million and \$30 million, the deputy head of the central bank added.

"We have suggested and prepared a set of laws which we believe are necessary," he said. "One is a law that would introduce a paperless system and allow paperless trading in Lebanon. Therefore, you move away from depending on paper in transactions, particularly securities transactions," Saidi said.

The second law, which is an essential one, is on credit cards and electronic means of payment. This is a completely new law which we are proposing that will help us develop the credit card business," he added.

allow electronic means of payment — debit cards, electronic transfers and eventually Internet transfers, Saidi said.

The law on credit cards will define responsibilities of the card holder and issuer. The central bank will be authorised to supervise all electronic payments and the payment system in general.

Saidi said the central bank would also propose a law to let banks and companies securitise assets. "The third item on the legal agenda... will allow companies to securitise assets, and banks to securitise assets which they own. For example, a bank that has a loan portfolio could issue securities against that loan portfolio," he said.

As part of the payments project, the central bank is working on a network to provide voice and data links between the central bank and its branches. Commercial banks will be able to join the network and

link ATMs and points of sales, Saidi said.

"This would give us the technological infrastructure for the payments system in Lebanon... this is based on the fibre-optic network that the government has now put in and that links all the major cities in Lebanon," he said.

"It will link first the central bank to all its branches and then in the second phase commercial banks will get linked up to our own branches throughout Lebanon," he added.

"It would mean that foreigners from outside, tourists and others could interchangeably use their cards, their debit or credit cards in Lebanon or elsewhere in the world very efficiently and in all range of currencies," Saidi said.

"It would facilitate liquidity flow into Lebanon and make it more efficient," he said, emphasising the importance of an efficient payment system.

Saifi challenges Murad for the post of ACC president

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Members of Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC) will elect a new council this month from a pool of 28 candidates.

Chamber sources said that incumbent President Haidar Murad will face Riyad Saifi in a race for the votes of 30,000 merchants on Nov. 17.

Murad's Al Wifaq Block (accord) will contest Saifi's Al Ta'awun in the election in which the winner of a majority of the votes will be declared the next president of the chamber.

Two more members registered as candidates Saturday. Waleed Khairi, a member of the Chamber of Industry, and Hamid Abdo, bringing the total number of candidates to 28.

Khatib failed to win a previous election and is contesting this election as an independent along with three other candidates. Observers say independent candidates have little chance to win amid fierce competition from the two blocs.

The Greater Amman Municipality is expected to nominate a committee to supervise the upcoming election. The elected council will run the affairs of traders in the country for the next four years.

Among the hot issues which the two camps will raise during the elections are ways to enhance the Kingdom's trade with Arab states, domestic problems and how to "snatch" a larger share of the Palestinian market.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 10/10/1998											
LAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	PRICE
355,300	170,000	ARAB BANK	16.5	99	26	760	153005	201.25	202.00	.75	+
2,940	1,520	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	12.4	4.58	8	4289	6541	1.53	1.53	0.00	0
3,700	1,000	BAJF OF JORDAN	F	0.00	13	9050	9669	1.06	1.07	.01	+
2,680	1,510	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	11.0	6.60	8	15339	24395	1.58	1.57	-.01	-
6,510	2,710	THE HOUSING BK.	17.8	3.56	24	8490	23894	2.75	2.75	0.00	0
3,450	1,750	JOR. KAWAT BANK	1.1	0.00	1	150	261	1.75	1.74	-.01	-
850	530	JOR. CILF BANK	9	0.00	14	14364	7641	1.53	1.54	.01	+
1,220	800	UNION BK. S.V. INV.	9	0.00	1	100	190	1.90	1.88	-.02	-
3,900	1,350	JOR. INV. F.M. BANK	22.0	2.50	1	50	72	1.42	1.43	.01	+
850	600	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	P	0.00	2	2500	1635	.65	.65	0.00	0
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 267.95	CHNG: -0.34	98	55392	227302				
3,100	2,700	JORDAN INSURANCE	13.3	4.84	1	50000	155000	3.00	3.10	.10	+
1,700	1,630	NAT. AQLIA INSUR.	29.4	0.00	2	552	911	1.65	1.65	0.00	0
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 127.91	CHNG: +1.04	3	50552	155911				
2,240	1,410	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.3	5.77	14	9234	13194	1.44	1.43	-.01	-
4,110	1,480	1810 ELECTRICITY	11.5	5.38	8	4880	8950	2.40	2.36	-.04	-
5,500	3,200	HUMER MINERALS	73.8	0.00	1	100	450	4.73	4.50	-.23	-
2,600	1,710	SHIPPING LINES	60.4	4.68	1	500	855	1.71	1.71	0.00	0
1,120	680	REAL ESTATE INV.	14.3	0.00	1	300	215	1.75	1.73	-.02	-
1,500	770	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	7	0.00	2	750	203	2.77	2.77	0.00	0
3,400	1,060	MID. EAST HOTELS	9	0.00	2	530	577	1.09	1.09	0.00	0
4,800	1,880	ARAB INTL. INV. EDCO.	8.3	2.13	3	5150	9683	1.88	1.88	0.00	0
1,900	800	SABA EDUCATION	20.3	0.00	2	3000	2640	1.89	1.88	-.01	-
810	500	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	500	250	.50	.50	0.00	0
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 105.22	CHNG: -0.28	35	24944	37050				
3,500	1,840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	10.9	5.98	6	10387	19110	1.85	1.84	-.01	-
4,110	1,480	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	10.9	5.98	6	10387	19110	1.85	1.84	-.01	-
6,500	1,750	ARAB POTASH CO.	18.7	5.26	2	20000	76000	3.75	3.80	.05	+
12,250	10,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.1	8.51	9	841	8617	10.47	10.45	-.02	-
5,740	2,400	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	7.0	2.95	37	11882	30304	2.56	2.56	0.00	0
1,420	770	GENERAL. PETROL.	7	4.43	1	200	316	1.66	1.58	-.08	-
1,420	560	RAFIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	2	375	203	.57	.54	-.03	-
6,350	4,700	DAR ALMAHAR DV. INV.	6.2	6.80	15	17370	89524	5.22	5.15	-.07	-
2,980	1,700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	13.2	13.97	3	1150	2059	1.79	1.79	0.00	0
900	670	ARAB PAPER CONV. IND.	23.2	0.00	2	400	304	.76	.76	0.00	0
790	370	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	4	150	69	.46	.46	0.00	0
650	370	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	20	17950	5042	.29	.28	-.01	-
670	340	JOR. ROCKETRY IND.	9	0.00	1	500	175	.35	.35	0.00	0
1,760	760	UTVY. CHEM. IND.	10.7	7.62	3	200	209	1.01	1.05	.04	+
2,200	690	NAT. CABLE WIR. REVC	31.4	0.00	1	640	430	.69	.67	-.02	-
700	390	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	7.0	0.00	5	3500	1335	.38	.37	-.01	-
1,260	530	UNIV. MOON. IND.	9.8	9.68	3	3000	1860	.62	.62	0.00	0
1,920	480	JOR. IND. RESOURCES	9	0.00	7	1118	1540	.50	.49	-.01	-
1,260	530	WAT. CHEM. IND.	8.6	8.13	3	492	608	1.23	1.23	0.00	0
1,080	600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	8.7	16.13	12	14702	9113	.62	.62	0.00	0
1,560	1,150	EXP. REAR REAR	42.0	0.00	1	1800	1920	1.28	1.28	0.00	0
1,310	910	INTL. TORACCO	7.2	5.66	7	5000	5150	1.03	1.03	0.00	0
890	660	JORDAN STEEL	9.6	8.14	13	5909	5077	.86	.86	0.00	0
730	580	NAT. ALUMINIUM	32.7	0.00	5	10750	7091	.66	.66	0.00	0
670	520	MID. EAST COMPLEX	9.6	0.00	3	1330	716	.53	.53	0.00	0
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 75.94	CHNG: +0.07	175	131779	267485				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 163.50	CHNG: +0.25	311	262666	697747				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 10/10/1998											
N 1,050	.820	EXPORT & FIN. B.K. 751	15.4	0.00	7	14000	8120	.84	.83	-.01	-
N 1,000	.780	JOR. INT. INSURANCE CO	8	0.00	1	150	147	.93	.93	0.00	0
N 1,000	1,000	ARAB CEMENT IND. CO.	8	0.00	3	25000	25000	1.00	1.00	0.00	0
N 490	.270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	8	0.00	3	14000	1620	.29	.30	.01	+
N 800	.500	UNION INV.	8	0.00	9	45000	23850	.53	.53	0.00	0
N 620	.240	ARAB P.T. INVEST.	8	0.00	4	1000	234	.24	.24	0.00	0
N 1,010	.100	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	8	0.00	2	640	52	.80	.82	.02	+
N 2,220	1,050	CENTURY INV. GROUP	8	0.00	4	500	513	1.05	1.00	-.05	-
N 1,000	.500	ARAB FOR. INVEST. CO.	14.5	0.00	2	1118	78	.88	.85	-.04	-
N 600	.270	ARAB FOOD & FEED	9	0.00	1	400	128	.32	.32	0.00	0
N 430	.200	ARAB TRL. INV. TRD.	24.2	0.00	1	250	53	.21	.21	0.00	0
N 390	.230	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	2	310	78	.25	.25	0.00	0
N 580	.250	NATL. MOLT. IND. MANICO	8	0.00	6	6917	1733	.26	.25	-.01	-
N 350	.190	WIDEAST PHARM. 904	8	0.00	1	250	110	.55	.54	-.01	-
N 660	.340	IND. CERAMIC	8.7	0.00	3	3500	1755	.34	.33	-.01	-
N 950	.540	ADVANCED PHARMA. IND.	9	0.00	6	2280	1276	.56	.56	0.00	0
N 640	.430	NATL. POLYESTER	9	0.00	4	15236	8074	.53	.53	0.00	0
GRAND TOTAL					64	123444	73055				

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're drawing attention today. Others want to know how you do it, and you may not know how to tell them. You're just using your natural talents. Use them to achieve an important objective. Your quick wit and enthusiasm are required, too. Remember to stick to the high road. You're an inspiration.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) There's still a lot of coming and going, but you can hide yourself away in a safe place and manage things from there. This is a position you love to find yourself in, and you do it well. Your talents will be put to use, that's for sure. Others need your help in making practical decisions, so be there for them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) If you applied for a loan and didn't get it, apply again. The favourable conditions will be in effect for some time, so you don't have to do it right now. Mercury's going into Scorpio, meaning you'll have to be more guarded in your speech for the next couple weeks. That's OK. It'll be good practice.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) There's someone who just rubs you the wrong way. You usually try not to say what's on your mind, but today it looks like this person can take whatever you dish out. On the other hand, you might decide to keep quiet just to have the advantage. Your strength lies in doing what you choose to, not what you have to.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Something you've been trying to achieve at work is about to become possible. Conditions have changed, and an opportunity is going to fall right into your lap. Figure out what it might be, so you'll be ready for it tomorrow. Planning is definitely in order, so you'd better do it. Everybody else in the game certainly will.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Barriers to achieving your dreams are starting to dissolve, especially in matters of romance and/or having children, or in your relationships with the children you already have. The fog is going to clear, and it'll be easier to achieve long-term objectives. If you don't have any yet, make that your top priority.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can have what

you want if you can pass the test. Start studying. You'll know you're learning when you sail through a situation that would previously have stopped you. You'll juggle your attention between home and career more successfully than before. Let others serve you and help you achieve security.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) There's been a fog over a certain area of your life, but today things will start getting easier. All sorts of wonderful possibilities are opening up, including travel. Perhaps the confusion was about where to go on this beautiful Sunday. Have a great time, whatever you wind up doing.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Neptune's going direct, and that's good for you. Neptune is higher religion and philosophy, and that's part of the reason you're so good at esoteric thinking. Today, you'll be better at practical matters. If you're careful, you can make an excellent deal. But don't tell everything you know. It's OK keep something to yourself.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Conditions are changing today, and you'll find it easier accomplish long-range goals. Start by figuring out what those are, if you don't know by now. A partner can help today, especially with a technical matter. He or she could help you find funding to buy a new one, if all else fails.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You may have been worried about the past lately. That condition is changing, so you're more able to use your experience to create the future you envision instead of the one you fear. Mercury's going into Scorpio tonight, so there's a note of caution. Only share your revelations with a person who can keep a secret.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Romance looks good today. In fact, it's even getting better. It will be easier today for you to relax around other people. That goes not only for your friends, but also for your favourite sweetheart. If you



Lindsay Davenport of the United States celebrates her semi-final win over Spain's Arantxa Sanchez at the WTA tournament in Filderstadt. Davenport won the match 7-6, 6-4 (AP Photo)

Davenport takes over No. 1 spot

FILDERSTADT (AFP) — Switzerland's Martina Hingis was dethroned as World No. 1 by American rival Lindsay Davenport on Friday when she crashed to Dominique van Roost of Belgium in three sets in the WTA tournament quarter-final here.

Hingis was beaten 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 4-6 and her defeat means she will slip from top spot when the latest rankings are published on Monday. The 18-year-old Swiss held only a slender 26-point lead over Davenport before the tournament began and Friday's loss ends an 80-week reign as the World No. 1.

Hingis first moved to the top of the rankings, replacing Steffi Graf on March 31, 1997.

Davenport, 22 and the reigning United States Open champion, becomes only the eighth woman to hold the No. 1 position since the creation of official rankings in 1975.

Her compatriot Chris Evert inaugurated the list.

On hearing of Hingis's defeat and her consequent promotion, Davenport, seeded two at Filderstadt, whooped for joy saying it was the fulfilment of a childhood dream.

A gracious Hingis said: "Lindsay deserves this because she has played so well this year."

Davenport then celebrated her status by heating France's sev-



Martina Hingis of Switzerland reacts during her quarter-final match vs. Dominique Van Roost of Belgium at the WTA tournament in Filderstadt, Germany. Martina Hingis lost the match, by 3-6, 7-6, 4-6, and also her first place in the women's world tennis ranking list (AP Photo)

enth-seeded Wimhledon finalist Nathalie Tauziat 7-6 (7/1), 7-5.

In Friday's other quarter-finals, Spain's fourth-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario came

back after dropping the first set to beat Lisa Raymond of the United

States 1-6, 7-5, 6-2. And Sandrine Testud of France defeated big-hitting American teenager Serena Williams 6-3, 1-6, 6-1.

In the semi-finals, Davenport faces Sanchez Vicario while Van Roost plays Testud.

King says he wants Holyfield-Lewis bout

PARIS (AFP) — Don King, the flamboyant promoter of IBF and WBA heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield, said Saturday that he is keen to see a unification bout between Holyfield and Britain's Lennox Lewis, the WBC champion.

King, in France for two world title fights in Paris on Saturday night, said the long-awaited bout could finally become reality.

"We want Lewis and we are ready to knock him out," the American promoter said.

"There can no longer be excuses like 'Don King doesn't want the fight'. Evander is ready, willing and available."

"If they offer \$20 million for Holyfield, we'll accept. And I'll do the promotion. It could be anywhere in the world. I'll go where the wild goose goes. Show me the money."

King said he planned to fly to London on Sunday to open discussions with Lewis's handlers.

Holyfield said he was willing to face Lewis after his points win over fellow American Vaughn Bean in Atlanta on September 20.

Lewis' last bout was a 12-round points victory over previously-unbeaten Croatian Zeljko Mavrovic a week later in Connecticut.

Ivanisevic, Chang sail into Shanghai Open semifinals

SHANGHAI (AP) — Top-seeded Goran Ivanisevic and No. 2 Michael Chang battled past opponents Saturday to win their semifinals matches and advance to the finals of ATP's Shanghai Open.

Ivanisevic from Croatia regained the control that eluded him in the first set, the only set he has dropped in four rounds of play, to defeat sixth-seeded Ramon Delgado of Paraguay, 5-7, 6-3, 7-5.

American Michael Chang was down 4-5 in the first set after a series of errors, but managed to overcome fifth-seeded Paul Haarhuis, Netherlands, 7-5, 6-3.

Chang said the support of the mostly Chinese crowd helped him dig his way out of the first-set hole.

"When they started getting behind me it was a great feeling and that's why I enjoy playing so much in Asia. And the tide of the match turned and it allowed me to go on. It was crucial for me," Chang said after the match.

Ivanisevic and Chang will face off on Sunday.

Al Faisali top league standings as 2nd round begins Monday

By a Staff Reporter

STANDINGS AFTER 1ST ROUND

AMMAN — The second round of the Premier League Championship starts Monday with a packed schedule designed to end the country's leading soccer event on Nov. 20.

The top ten teams will be playing two matches a week to end the fourth and last of the season's soccer competitions before the start of the cold and wet winter months.

Al Faisali are looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title after winning the season-opening fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali took the second of the season's four soccer championships when they won their record 10th Jordan Cup.

Kufroum, playing in the prestigious league for the third year running, made history when they clinched their first ever major title

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Faisali	9	8	1	1	26	5	24
Wihdat	9	7	1	1	22	9	22
Ramtha	9	4	3	2	13	11	15
Hussein	9	4	1	4	7	7	13
S. Al Hussein	9	2	5	2	9	12	11
Qadissieh	9	2	4	3	14	15	10
Jazireh	9	2	3	4	7	11	9
Kufroum	9	1	5	3	6	16	8
Arabi	9	1	3	5	11	22	6
Ahli	9	1	3	6	4	11	3

by beating Al Hussein to win the country's third title — the Jordan Football Association (JFA) Shield.

Al Wihdat, who have won the Cup and Cup Winners Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four, conceded their top standing to Al Faisali this week after being held to a 3-3 draw with Al Qadissieh.

Al Faisali on the other hand, topped the standings after a 4-1 win over Al Arabi.

Al Ramtha moved up to third after a 1-0 win over Al Jazireh. Kufroum scored their first victory of the event and moved up to 9th after a 1-0 win over Al Hussein who dropped one place.

Shabab Al Hussein moved up two places after a 2-0 win over winless Al Ahli who remained at the bottom of the table with the prospect of relegation now looming closer.

The competition which kicked off in April has

been interrupted by a series of suspensions starting with the month-long boycott of seven teams over the issue of ticket sales allocation before the JFA settled the dispute.

The championship then resumed only to halt again in June as the national team prepared for the Arab Cup qualifiers. It then resumed in August before stopping again for the Arab Cup finals in Qatar where Jordan was eliminated in the first round.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Borg beats Wilander

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Bjorn Borg won a tie-breaker Saturday to defeat fellow Swede Mats Wilander in a semi-final match at the MTN Champions at the University of Pretoria. On Friday, former world champion Wilander had advanced after winning a tiebreaker in his first round match against Iran's Mansour Bahrami. The Swede fought all the way to the wire before coming through in one hour 40 minutes. In a match between former Davis Cup chiefs, Yannick Noah of France beat Danie Visser in a first round match Friday after the South African dropped his serve in the ninth game of the second set.

N. Korean wins Beijing marathon

BEIJING (AFP) — North Korea's Kim Jung Mon has won the Beijing marathon Saturday in an official time of 2hrs 13min 49sec, the official Xinhua news agency reported. South Korean Chang Ki-shik came in second in 2:14.07 and Brazilian Osmaro de Souza Silva was third in 2:14.26. The marathon race, the biggest in Beijing, kicked off with 19,000 runners starting from Tiananmen Square. "The 1998 Beijing marathon will be the biggest ever in the meet's history in terms of the number of participants," said Shang Xiutang, general secretary of the Chinese Athletic Association. Shang told the agency Friday that 19,422 runners from 30 countries had registered but only 914 athletes would contest the full marathon. With a course record set in 1986 of 2:07.35, the prize money is \$20,000 for the men's race and \$10,000 for the women's race. The women's race was won by Chinese Wan Yanrong in 2:28.50, just one second clear of second placer Russian Liubov Mirgouonova while North Korean Jong Song-Ok was third in 2:30.48.

Ailing Bremen sign Ailton

BREMEN (AFP) — Struggling German outfit Werder Bremen on Friday announced they are set to sign Brazilian striker Ailton Concealvez da Silva in a bid to escape the Bundesliga basement. Bremen manager Willy Lemke snapped up the 25-year-old from Mexican side Tigres of Monterrey for some \$1.8 million. If he passes a medical, Ailton will make his debut at home to Freiburg on October 17. Croatian striker Ivica Olic of second division Marsonia Slavonski Brod is likewise Germany-bound, having agreed a deal with Hertha BSC Berlin. Olic, 19, plumped for Hertha after earlier interest from Inter Milan, who had an option on him.

Colombian to replace Zanardi

MINNEAPOLIS (AFP) — Colombia's Juan Pablo Montoya has signed a three-year deal to replace two-time reigning champion Alex Zanardi or Italy in the Championship Auto Racing Teams series. Montoya's deal with Chip Ganassi racing to drive alongside veteran 1996 champion Jimmy Vasser of the United States comes after a Formula 3000 championship season for the South American racer. Montoya has served as a test driver for the Formula One Williams team for which Zanardi will drive starting next season. Zanardi follows the footsteps of Canada's Jacques Villeneuve, who won an Indy-car crown and then departed for FI.

Lecce player suspended for drugs

MILAN (AFP) — Lecce defender Cristiano Pavone was suspended by Italian football's disciplinary committee on Friday evening after testing positive for steroids. The Serie B footballer tested positive on August 28 after apparently unwittingly using a cream containing traces of steroids to treat cuts and bruises, following a fall from a motorbike.

Kirsten, Bierhoff fit for Germans

BURSA (AFP) — Germany's striker Ulf Kirsten is fit to face Turkey in his country's opening Euro 2000 qualifier here on Saturday after recovering from a sore Achilles tendon. After the team's final training session on Friday evening team doctor Hans-Wilhelm Muller-Wohlfahrt gave the 32-year-old Bayer Leverkusen star the all-clear to start what will be a vital test for new coach Erich Ribbeck. Kirsten will be partnered in attack by AC Milan's Oliver Bierhoff, who has recovered from a groin strain.

Skip Away goes for record

BELMONT (AFP) — Skip Away makes a bit for horse racing immortality here Saturday, trying to become thoroughbred racing's all-time money leader at the \$1 million Gold Cup. "If he runs the way he feels, he's going to be awesome," said Skip Away's trainer, Sonny Hine. Skip Away is a two-time reigning Gold Cup champion. The five-year-old son of Skip Trial has won nine races in a row and conquered Gentlemen, his toughest expected rival, by almost two lengths in their last meeting. His most recent loss came in 1997 at the Woodward when he was beaten by Formal Gold. Skip Away has won \$9,506,360 and if he adds the \$600,000 Gold Cup top prize as well, he will move past retired Cigar's total of \$9,999,815 to become the all-time thoroughbred money leader. The race will be the showcase of the Breeder's Cup preview events. The Breeder's Cup is November 7 at Louisville, Kentucky.

Ince handed three match ban

LONDON (AFP) — Paul Ince was handed a surprise three-match ban by UEFA which rules him out of playing a competitive match for England until June 1999, the Football Association announced here on Friday. The Liverpool midfielder was shown the red card for a second bookable offence after a foul on Henrik Larsson during England's 2-1 defeat against Sweden last month. That would normally have resulted in a one-match ban. Leaving Ince on the sidelines for Saturday's game with Bulgaria at Wembley but available to face Luxembourg four days later. But the former Manchester United star compounded his plight by arguing with Italian referee Pierluigi Collina before England captain Alan Shearer intervened and then appearing to aim a V-sign at Swedish fans as he left the field. Ince was given a statutory one-match suspension for the red card with a further two-match ban for the comments he made to the referee, the FA said. He misses England's qualifying games in Luxembourg next Wednesday and at home to Poland on March 27. The next competitive game he will be available for is the return qualifier at home to Sweden on June 5.

JORDAN TIMES e-mail:
jotimes@go.com.jo

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Histari Vans Theatre
	TEL: 363144	TEL: 363144	TEL: 5699233	TEL: 5677420	TEL: 9934791	TEL: 5934793	TEL: 4625155
	Bruce Willis .. in LAST MAN STANDING Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Jennifer Tilly & Gina Gershon .. in BOUND Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam .. in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30	CONCORD '1' NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria ARMAGEDDON Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Lesley Nielsen .. in MR. MAGOO Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Watch out for the new play

Sport

Cleveland

Cycling

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NEW HOTEL

After island dispute ruling Yemen to seek good relations with Eritrea

Agencies

YEMENI FOREIGN Minister Abdul Kader Bajammal said Saturday that he expected relations with Eritrea to return to normal following the resolution of their dispute over the Hanish archipelago.

"Without a doubt, relations will become fraternal again as they were in the past," said Bajammal, quoted by the official news agency SABA.

"We want close cooperation between us in order to guarantee peace and stability in the region and establish good neighbourly relations," he said.

The two nations said Friday that they accepted the ruling of a London-based international arbitration panel that awarded Yemen the bulk of the disputed islands, whose sovereignty had never been determined.

The panel awarded Yemen the archipelago's major islands of Greater Hanish, Lesser Hanish and Jebel Zugar. They are located in the Red Sea close to the Gulf of Aden, and control access to the Bab Al Mandab strait.

"The sovereignty awarded to Yemen means the traditional fishing activity in the region must be maintained, including access and unrestricted use for the fishermen of both Eritrea and Yemen," the tribunal

ruled. Eritrea and Yemen clashed in December 1995 when Eritrean troops took over Greater Hanish, but signed a French-brokered accord in May 1996 to seek international arbitration in the matter.

Sanaa claimed to have inherited the archipelago from the Ottoman Empire, while Asmara said that its sovereignty of the islands had been established "under the Italian, British and Ethiopian occupations" of Eritrea.

The peaceful resolution of the dispute was hailed by a number of world leaders.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak phoned Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and saluted "Yemen and Eritrea's use of international arbitration to resolve their dispute peacefully," SABA said.

Djibouti President Hassan Guled Aptidon and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz also called Saleh.

Meanwhile the Arab League also applauded the end of the dispute.

"Arbitration, dialogue and reason are the ways to resolve disputes," it said.

S. Arabia
congratulates Yemen

Saudi Arabia, itself locked in a territorial row with Yemen,

congratulated its southern neighbour on the international court ruling. Yemen's news agency said.

In a telephone conversation with Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Crown Prince Abdullah "praised the spirit of wisdom and the peaceful approach adopted by the two neighbours Yemen and Eritrea," the SABA agency reported.

Regional heavyweight Saudi Arabia and Yemen have disputed the demarcation of their joint borders since the 1930s. The two countries' security forces have clashed occasionally.

Three people were killed in fighting between Saudi and Yemeni forces on the disputed Red Sea island of Duwaila in July.

Yemen has said it would consider putting the case to international arbitration if bilateral talks failed, but Saudi Arabia has said it favours resolving the dispute through bilateral joint committees.

Yemen's Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Ben Hussein Al Ahmar said on Saturday his country's border dispute with Saudi Arabia could not be compared to its row with Eritrea.

He said Yemen would only agree to arbitration with Saudi Arabia as a last resort.



HEBRON CLASHES CONTINUE: Palestinian youths throw stones over burning cartons at Israeli troops during clashes in the West Bank town of Hebron on Saturday. Clashes in Hebron have continued for almost two weeks despite a step forward negotiated by U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in which the Israeli and Palestinian sides have agreed to attend a summit near Washington next week (AP photo)

Taleban send representative to Pakistan to meet U.N. special envoy

ISLAMABAD (AP) — A representative of Afghanistan's Taleban religious army arrived in neighbouring Pakistan late on Saturday to meet the United Nations special envoy, according to Pakistani sources.

Wakil Ahmed Muttawakil, who is close to the Taleban's reclusive leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, arrived in Pakistan in a "special aircraft" from the Taleban headquarters in southern Kandahar, they said.

Muttawakil is expected to reiterate the Taleban's invitation to U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi to visit Omar at his headquarters in Afghanistan.

Ibrahim, who arrived in Pakistan last Thursday from Iran, is in the region

to try to find a peaceful end to a deadly standoff between Iranian soldiers and Taleban troops on the border that separates the two countries.

Until Saturday Muttawakil's secrecy-cloaked arrival in Pakistan, the Taleban leadership had been refusing to meet Ibrahim, except in Kandahar.

However, it's believed that Pakistan, which is one of the Taleban's closest allies, persuaded the Taleban leadership to send Muttawakil to Pakistan.

Pakistan is one of only three countries to recognise the Taleban, who have become increasingly ostracised in the international community, chastised for its human rights record and its harbouring

of Muslim militant Osama Ben Laden.

Citing security reasons, Ibrahim earlier said he could not travel to Afghanistan, but would impose on his Pakistani hosts to use their influence to bring the Taleban to Pakistan.

The United Nations pulled all its international staff out of Afghanistan last Aug. 21 after U.S. missiles slammed into suspected terrorist training camps in eastern Afghanistan.

An Italian U.N. staff member was killed in Kabul on Aug. 21 apparently by Taleban soldiers protesting the missile attack.

The U.N. has been negotiating with the Taleban to return to Afghanistan and

Ibrahim said earlier "the Taleban know very well" what is needed before the U.N. can return. He didn't elaborate.

The Taleban army control roughly 90 per cent of Afghanistan and the northern-based opposition the remaining 10 per cent.

Iran sent its troops to its eastern border with Afghanistan after the Taleban admitted killing nine Iranian diplomats and an Iranian journalist in August in the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Iran is demanding an apology from the Taleban and that the culprits be handed over to Tehran for trial and punishment. The Taleban has refused calling the slain Iranian diplomats "conspirators."

U.N. sanctions will remain unchanged until Iraq cooperates — Cohen

MANAMA (AFP) — U.S. Secretary of Defence William Cohen said Saturday that there will be no modification of U.N. sanctions before Iraq resumes cooperation with U.N. disarmament inspectors.

"Iraq must fully comply with the resolutions of the U.N. Security Council and the agreement that was signed with the secretary general of the U.N.," he said at a news conference in Manama.

"We are hopeful that [Iraqi President] Saddam Hussein will abide by the resolutions and the agreement," said Cohen, who is touring the region.

"Once he complies with these, there could then be

a review of sanctions by the U.N. Security Council," he said.

"Saddam Hussein cannot hold [up] inspections by UNSCOM," the U.N. Special Commission on disarmament Iraq, he said.

Cohen said that "the U.S. is capable of military action, however we are hopeful that there will not be any need for that."

Iraq suspended its cooperation with UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency Aug. 5, charging that they would never declare Iraq has disarmed, the condition for a lifting of the U.N. embargo against Baghdad.

The embargo was imposed after Iraq invaded

Kuwait in 1990 and remained in place after Baghdad was ousted from its smaller neighbour the following year.

After Iraq suspended cooperation with the inspectors Aug. 5, the Security Council retaliated by halting its periodic review of the situation in Iraq, effectively prolonging the sanctions indefinitely.

Iraq charged Saturday that the Cohen tour was intended "to strengthen the U.S. grip on Gulf Arab countries, boost the U.S. military land and sea presence and conclude new arms contracts" with Gulf countries.

"Cohen's tour is a new link in the plot represented

by the regional alliances which have been set up, like the one between Turkey and the Zionists, in order to surround the Arab Nation," the official Al Jumhuriya newspaper said.

"The Pentagon hopes that this tour will increase regional cooperation in order to establish a regional defensive system against long-range missiles," Al Jumhuriya said, adding that the system would be directed against Iraq.

Cohen is scheduled to leave Saturday for Qatar then go on to the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Police arrest Sheikh Omar's son

CAIRO (AP) — Police detained for 24 hours the son of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the blind Egyptian cleric jailed in the United States, police officials said Saturday. The arrest Thursday of Abdullah Abdul Rahman in Cairo came as part of a "routine security sweep and search of the area," said the official, speaking on customary condition of anonymity. He was released Friday night and no charges were made. Police arrested Abdul Rahman as he drove up to his house in Cairo, said Montasser Al Zayat, Abdul Rahman's lawyer. "They arrested him, searched the house and took him away," Al Zayat told the Associated Press. He said no reason was given for the arrest, which was his first.

Convicted Saudi thief's hand cut off

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi authorities have cut off by sword the right hand of a Saudi man for stealing. Nasser Al Mallouhi was convicted several times of stealing and his hand was amputated Friday, the Arab News reported Saturday. The paper did not give any other details. Amputations are carried out in a public square on the rare occasions they are implemented. This was only the second time this year an amputation has been carried out.

Tunisian navy rescues 54 illegal emigrants

TUNIS (AP) — The Tunisian navy has rescued 54 Africans abandoned by their escorts as they tried to sail to Italy, a Tunisian government newspaper reported Saturday. Two boats skipped by Moroccans were found carrying the emigrants — nine from Somalia, 10 from Sierra Leone and 34 from Ghana, the newspaper La Presse reported. One boat left from a port near Ceuta and another left Libyan waters to meet the first along the Tunisian coast, according to the report. The captains had fled before the ships were seized.

Iran police seize 1,850 kg of opium

TEHRAN (R) — Iranian police seized 1,850 kilograms of opium after a gun battle with drug traffickers, the official Iranian news agency IRNA reported on Saturday. Police also seized ammunition and rifles from the traffickers after the shoot-out two days ago in Tabas, about 300-kilometre southeast of Tehran, IRNA said. Iran is a major transit route for drugs smuggled from Afghanistan and Pakistan — the "Golden Crescent" — to Europe and oil-rich Gulf Arab states. Iranian officials say there are some 1.4 million drug addicts in this country of 60 million.

Boy survives snakebite on plane

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — A six-year-old boy is recovering here after being bitten by a deadly snake during a plane flight from Melbourne to Perth. Officials of Ansett Australia airline are at a loss to explain how the snake could have been on the flight. Doctors say medical tests in Perth have proved that Khyll Hardy, of the Melbourne suburb of Heidelberg, was bitten by a member of the taipan family. Khyll's mother Melissa said Saturday the most likely explanation was that the snake was being carried illegally by a passenger and was whisked away quickly when the plane landed.

Doctor with fear of needles awarded \$800,000

LONDON (AFP) — A junior British doctor has been awarded almost half a million pounds (\$800,000) in damages after accidentally pricking himself with a needle, it was reported Friday. Although the London doctor picked up no infection from the injury, she developed a phobia about needles and is now unable to work, the British Medical Association News Review said. She pricked herself on a needle left on a drugs trolley at Charing Cross Hospital, west London, in December 1992. The doctor, who had been qualified about a year, developed increasing anxieties about needles, blood and AIDS, and struggled with work before going off sick almost two years later. Now, according to the magazine, to whom the unidentified doctor spoke, she is unable to even leave the house and is unlikely to work as a doctor again.

'Ben Laden gets money from Saudi royalty'

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Osama Ben Laden receives millions from the Saudi Arabian royalty to subsidise his anti-Western campaign of terrorist attacks, according to U.S. intelligence officials.

The officials told U.S. News and World Report magazine that Ben Laden — who has sworn to overthrow King Fahd and his pro-U.S. regime — probably receives the money from resentful members of the extended Saudi royal family.

Even though the thousands of Saudi princes and princesses share relatives, the royal family has a history of in-fighting: in 1975, for example, it was a prince that murdered then-King Faisal.

The magazine reports in its Oct. 12 issue that Ben Laden has already exhausted his own considerable fortune, originally believed to be around \$300 million, and now depends on donations from supporters and protection of money to finance his operations.

At mid-year two representatives of wealthy Saudis travelled to Afghanistan to visit Ben Laden and paid him not to carry out attacks in Saudi Arabia, the magazine reported, quoting U.S. intelligence sources.

Heavy security at pyramids ahead of Verdi's Aida

By Safaa Kanj
Agency France Presse

CAIRO — Verdi's opera Aida will return to its natural setting on the plateau of the Giza Pyramids, for six nights starting Monday amid heavy security.

Egypt is still licking its wounds from the Islamist attack outside the Hatshepsut pharaonic temple in Luxor in November 1997 — one month after the site hosted Aida — that killed 57 foreign tourists and four Egyptians.

Organisers said several security committees were set up at the highest level to ensure the safety of the audience, which is expected to include on opening night Henrik, Prince Consort of Denmark and husband of Queen Margrethe.

Opera-goers will be shuttled by bus from specially-designated parking lots near the Pyramids plateau in Giza as part of the security mea-

sures and police will man positions all around the site.

The seating to accommodate 3,000 opera fans has been set up at the foot of Khafre (or Khephren), the second pyramid, which along with Cheops and Mykerinos and the sphinx below the hill form the last of the world's Seven Wonders.

"We decided to hold Aida at the Pyramids because this is its natural setting, this is where Verdi imagined it to be," said Hassan Kamy, executive producer of the opera.

"The decor will be kept simple to let the Pyramids serve as props. There will be a light show and the cast will comprise more than 850 people, including 500 troops from the central security forces," Kamy said.

The opera set aside a 15-million-pound (\$4.5 million) budget for this epic love story of Egyptian army chief Radames and Aida the daughter of his arch-enemy the King of

Ethiopia.

Aida's Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi wrote the opera for Khedive Ismail Pasha who had commissioned it for the 1869 inauguration of the Cairo Opera House.

Based on an idea by French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette, Aida was first performed in 1871 because the costumes and decor were delayed in France by the Franco-Prussian war.

Another Verdi classic, Il Rigoletto, was performed for the inauguration of the opera house.

Ninety per cent of the seats for the opening night have been sold out while an average 60 per cent of seats have been sold out for the other nights, Kamy said.

Tickets for Egyptian and foreign residents are priced in pounds with the highest selling for 250 pounds (\$75). Foreigners must pay in dollars with the cheapest ticket set at \$100 and the steepest at \$250.

Aida has become Egypt's operatic mascot and plans are already underway for the 1999 version of Verdi's masterpiece on the Pyramids plateau.

"I don't expect Luxor to serve as a backdrop for Aida for another two years at least," Kamy said, because of the 1997 massacre of foreigners.

Sopranos Maria Guleghina and Lucia Mazarria of Italy and Leona Mitchell of the United States will share the Aida role, with Guleghina set to play the Ethiopian princess on opening night Monday.

Radames will be played by Russian tenor Vladimir Galouzine for three nights including opening night and Nicola Martinucci on other nights.

The orchestra will be conducted by Patrick Fournillier of France who currently heads the Arturo Toscanini Symphony Orchestra in Parma, Italy, and by Giorgio Croci of Italy.



Cake baked in light bulb oven wins contest

NEW YORK (R) — It is not easy baking a prizewinning cake in a toy oven heated by just a light bulb, but a 9-year-old from Arkansas proved it can be done. Lindsey Thompson of Little Rock, Arkansas, won the Baker of the Year contest sponsored by Easy-Bake Oven — the children's toy that bakes tiny cakes by the heat of a 100-watt light bulb inside a metal reflective oven. Thompson triumphed with her Toffee Trifle Cake, a candied concoction made from Easy-Bake cake mix, instant vanilla pudding and heaps of chocolate toffee.

Explicit sex guide for teenagers causes outrage

BIRMINGHAM (AFP) — The Labour-run city council of Birmingham has come under fire for distributing a sex guide to the city's teenagers which includes details on safe sex and homosexual relationships. The guide, which was paid for with \$134,000 of taxpayers' money in Britain's second city, is aimed at teenagers aged 14 to 17. Its content has outraged councillors from the minority opposition Conservatives, who claim it brings shame on Tony Blair's government. The guide gives advice on using flavoured condoms and urges teenagers to use condoms, especially during homosexual intercourse.

Funny smell draws fire-fighters and police

WINNIPEG (R) — Two men, who were allegedly cultivating marijuana in their garage, found themselves in handcuffs this week after they summoned the Winnipeg fire department for help when their home-grown crop caught fire. "When we opened the garage door there was a funny smell," said fire chief Lionel Gauthier. The police arrived with the fire department to investigate the problem at the house. "They might not have known that police automatically go to the scene with us," said Gauthier. Police seized 627 marijuana plants, 144 kilograms of dried marijuana all worth (C\$1.8 million) and growing equipment from the burned-out garage and the surrounding property.

Older, infertile women might have babies

WASHINGTON (R) — After fertility expert has surprised colleagues by announcing he has tried out a highly experimental procedure that involves mixing parts of the eggs of two women together. The procedure, aimed at helping older infertile women have babies, uses cloning technology although it is not actual cloning. Jamie Grifo, director of the division of reproductive endocrinology at New York University, says he has tried the new technique in two women. The idea is to rejuvenate the ageing eggs of an older woman using the "shell" of a younger woman's egg.

Clintons celebrate wedding anniversary

WASHINGTON (R) — Hillary Clinton brought home a taste of Arkansas to President Bill Clinton for a celebration of their 23rd wedding anniversary. The first lady got takeout food from three of Clinton's favourite restaurants in Little Rock: Doe's Eat Place, Shug's and Juanita's. "There's steak and tamales from Doe's, ribs from Shug's and tacos and enchiladas from Juanita's," said the first lady's spokeswoman, Marsha Berry. The first couple's anniversary is on Sunday but they decided to celebrate with a quiet evening at home on Friday because Mrs. Clinton will not be in town for the anniversary.